

A U S T R A L I A N

GOURMET TRAVELLER

RESTAURANT AWARDS
THE FINALISTS REVEALED

Winter feasts

Tasty Southern-style classics,
modern Chinese banquet, our favourite pumpkin recipes
plus how to master beef Bourguignon

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WINEMAKERS

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N°5

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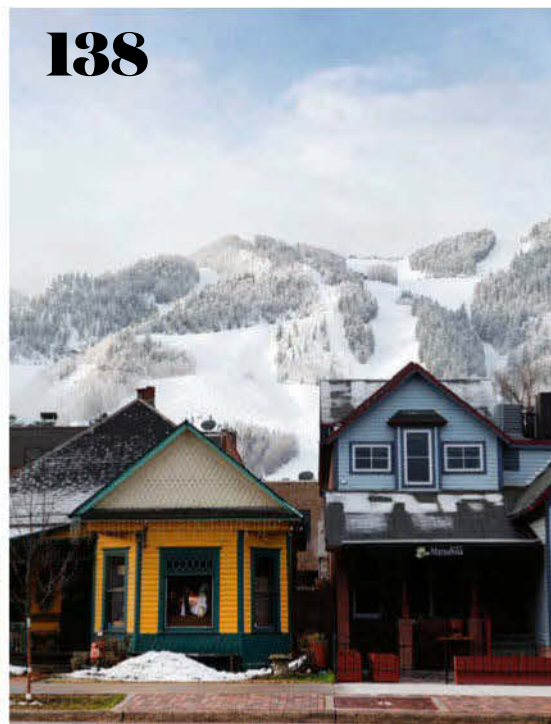
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RESTAURANT AWARDS 2016

AUGUST 2015

menus

*As winter comes to a close, comfort food is still the order of the day.
Make the most of it with these three menus from this issue.*

DRINK SUGGESTIONS MAX ALLEN



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40

HEARTY WINTER DINNER

Broccoli soup with crème fraîche
and hazelnuts

(PICTURED; RECIPE P46)

Beef Bourguignon

(RECIPE P57)

Rhubarb and strawberry
lattice pie (RECIPE P178)



Start with the yeasty, briny, apple-scented tang of a good *fino Sherry*: the 15-plus per cent alcohol will help thaw those winter chills. Then open a bottle of top-quality, full-bodied *shiraz* with the beef braise. And finish with a glass of fine *pommeau* (a blend of apple juice and apple brandy).

PREPARE-AHEAD LUNCH

Pumpkin, Gorgonzola and
rosemary pie (RECIPE P109)

Butter lettuce and dandelion
salad with hot bacon dressing

(RECIPE P118)

Rhubarb, strawberry and
pink peppercorn crumble with
chamomile ice-cream

(PICTURED; RECIPE P102)



Sparkling wine is lovely at lunchtime and the only preparation needed is chilling. *Pink Champagne*, cloudy funky *pet-nat*, dry *red lambrusco* – all would make good partners for this lunch. And a *sparkling moscato* with the crumble.

SUNDAY FOOTY GET-TOGETHER

Kimchi and cheese jaffles

(PICTURED; RECIPE P40)

Quick-fire fried chicken

(RECIPE P115)

Barbecue pit beans (RECIPE P115)



Beer, of course. Plenty of beer. Not just because you'll have loads of mates over to help you plough through this hearty spread of beer-friendly food, but also because, well, it's *the footy*. Go for a selection of fancy *craft beers* – IPAs, amber ales, saisons, sours – and some longnecks of VB for the traditionalists among you.

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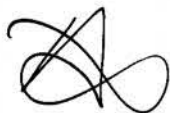
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Selecting our *Restaurant Awards finalists* presents the same dilemma each year – there are so many *deserving talents* it's difficult to pick just a handful.

This year is no exception. The range and quality of new restaurants that have opened in the past 12 months and the number of exciting chefs coming through the ranks are extraordinary, and that's to say nothing of the established players who deliver year in, year out, all the while creating new benchmarks. Newcomers to the game this year include an edgy African eatery in Adelaide and a wine-centric 15-seat bolthole in Byron Bay; a gang of Italian brothers in the outer Melbourne suburb of Beaconsfield punching way above their weight with an out-there dégustation menu, and a grilling maestro in Sydney's Surry Hills turning the coals like no other. And that's just the beginning. Congratulations to all the finalists in the 2016 *Gourmet Traveller* Restaurant Awards; shining a light on these remarkable talents is central to our commitment to seek out and celebrate the best food experiences Australia has to offer. For this year's finalists turn to page 86.

In our recipe pages, we drop by Canberra's Monster where chef Sean McConnell prepares a winter lunch menu (including his signature yabby jaffles; see page 94); Damien Pignolet shows us how to cook classic beef Bourguignon (page 56); we present our favourite pumpkin dishes (page 104), and Sydney's Americana-specialist restaurant, Hartsyard, shares its signature dishes, including the famed buttermilk fried chicken (page 112).

Happy August,



Anthea Loucas

ON THE COVER *Recipe Jerrie-Joy Redman-Lloyd*
Photography William Meppem Styling Emma Knowles
Food assistant Nick Banbury Merchandising Vanessa Austin



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CLAIR WEAVER

After being bitten by the travel bug as a 17-year-old backpacker, Clair Weaver became a flight attendant to see more of the world. But journalism was her true calling. Now an award-winning

journalist at *The Australian Women's Weekly*, she jumped at the chance to travel to the US ski resorts of Aspen and Crested Butte for *GT* (page 138). "It was such an adventure," she says. "We skied beautiful terrain, and a peek into the lives of the rich and famous was a bonus."



AIMEE JONES

Sydney-based stylist Aimee Jones has spent the past 13 years freelancing for Australia's premier lifestyle magazines. "Working on *Gourmet Traveller* is the ultimate," she says.

"Whether it's refashioning products or sourcing one-off pieces, there's so much room to be creative." Jones pulls together the covetable products on our news and On the Table pages each month. For this issue she scoured the country for beautiful candle-holders. See page 28.



HELEN CATHCART

London-based photographer Helen Cathcart specialises in food, lifestyle, portraits and interiors – it's a job she loves for its diversity. For this issue she shot

Munich's best eats for our travel feature on page 150. "I loved that we saw the city through food," she says, "from traditional Bavarian beer houses to cool neighbourhood restaurants. We had to capture everything in a day so we shot morning through to night, eating our way around the city."



OUR FAVOURITE PLATES OF THE MONTH

KOKOTXAS AL PIL-PIL

Great vinyl. Great vibes. Great snacks. Great hooch. The San Sebastián outpost of Gerald's Bar has everything you'd expect as a devotee of the Melbourne mothership. But authentic Basque food? If this lunch special of hake throats, slippery and mushroom-like in a silken pil-pil sauce from El Bulli-trained local chef Loren Herrero is any guide, it's the real deal. Top! *Gerald's Bar, Iparragirre 13, San Sebastián, Spain, +34 943 083 001* PAT NOURSE

VIETNAMESE BLOOD SAUSAGE

There's plenty to love on chef Thi Le's modern Asian menu at Anchovy, but perhaps it's the gorgeously textured spicy Vietnamese blood sausage topped with a sliver of fresh ginger and wrapped in a crisp cosberg leaf that gets the most love of all. *Anchovy, 338 Bridge Rd, Richmond, Vic, (03) 9428 3526* MICHAEL HARDEN

FRIED PO' BOY PRAWN COCKTAIL DOUGHNUT

What a mouthful. Chef Byron Fini has been kicking some serious flavour goals at Ace Pizza of late. Consider exhibit A, ladies and gentlemen of the jury: a fun combination of juicy prawns, iceberg lettuce and Marie Rose sauce in a springy savoury doughnut. Ace by name, ace by nature. *Ace Pizza, 448 Beaufort St, Highgate, WA, 0499 448 000* MAX VEENHUYZEN



Game On!

Good stock can transform a dish from the ordinary to the exceptional, but making it is a lengthy process. However, if time is not on your side there's no need to compromise the base of a wonderful meal, so here is the stock you would have made yourself if only you had more hours in the day. And for all those who have been asking 'Where's the Game Stock?' Here it is!



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STREET STYLE

Geoff Lindsay at Saigon Street in Seminyak. Inset: steak at Robert Marchetti's Plantation Grill.

AUSSIES ABROAD

Bali to dine for

Aussie chefs making waves in Bali.

Australia's hottest new dining suburb is Seminyak. Well, at least our chefs are flocking to Bali in record numbers to join the island's thriving restaurant scene. Jane and Geoff Lindsay opened Saigon Street in June, a "street-style" incarnation of their Melbourne Vietnamese eatery, Dandelion. "Dandelion is more focused on the imperial food of Hue, more like royal cuisine," Geoff says. "Our Bali model is more like the bia hoi menus of Hanoi."

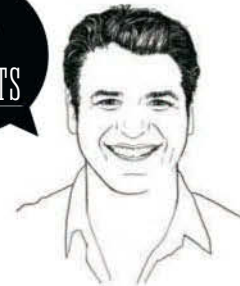
The MoVida crew is on its way, too, with co-owner Andy McMahon revealing he's opening in the Potato Head Beach Club complex in Seminyak later this year. Maurice Terzini hopes to have Da Maria, a tropical offshoot of his Bondi pizza venue, Da Orazio, open by December. He has been travelling to Bali for "decades", and says he's seen it change from a party island to an international dining destination. "It's exciting times," he says. "I'm also fortunate that my business partner, Adrian Reed, owns one of the busiest and best Mexican bars and restaurants on the island, Motel Mexicola."

The Lindsays, too, are frequent visitors to Bali, so when they were approached by Aki Kotzamichalis, one of the original partners of landmark beach bar Ku De Ta, they "jumped at it", Geoff says. For the MoVida team, the decision is based on a desire to expand the brand internationally. "We have partnered up with Potato Head," McMahon says, "because we like what they do."

Sydney-based restaurateur Robert Marchetti, who has been running the food and beverage offer at the Seminyak's Double-Six hotel for the past three years, believes Australian chefs have always been attracted to Bali, and he's a strong advocate for the island's dining scene. "I've eaten quite a bit through LA, Australia, and Asia, and I think that the restaurants in Bali stand the test of time against anything." Saigon Street, Jalan Petitenget 77X, Badung, Bali, Indonesia, +62 361 897 4007, saigonstreetbali.com



ASK THE EXPERTS



ANTHONY PUHARICH, BUTCHER

What's the key to nailing a really good classic Sunday roast?

First, and it almost goes without saying, buy the best-quality meat you can afford. Speak to your butcher about what you're thinking of cooking and what he thinks is best on the day. Something on the bone will make your roast a bit more special – not only does it look impressive, it'll also make for juicier, tastier meat. Make sure the meat has an even fat coverage, which will naturally baste the

roast while cooking. For consistent doneness, take the meat out of the fridge 20 minutes before it goes in the oven. Another way to guarantee even cooking is by investing in a good meat thermometer. Ideal internal cooked temperatures for beef, lamb and pork are 50C for rare, 55C for medium rare and 60C for medium. Your roast will continue to cook while it's resting so take it out of the oven a few degrees before it hits these internal temperatures. Make sure you don't overcrowd the pan; you need hot air circulating around the meat. Finally – rest, rest, rest. Cover the roast loosely with foil and give it 15-20 minutes, depending on size. Carve and serve the roast at the table for that added bit of theatre. Enjoy.

BLUE CHIP "English barbecue" might sound like an oxymoron, but it makes perfect sense in the context of Tyrrell's smoky hand-cooked crisps (\$4.19 at Coles). Other fun flavours include mature cheddar and chives, sea salt and cider vinegar and Sunday best roast chicken.



DAILY GRIND
Hank's Forbes
pepper mills and
Ike salt bowl.

MEET YOUR MAKER

Hank pepper mills and salt bowls

Subtle in style, strong on character.

Christian Tucker and Breeze Callahan grew up as family friends in Canberra, but it wasn't until the pair moved to Melbourne independently as adults that they decided to work together. A year ago their design studio, Hank, was established and already restaurants such as Canberra's Italian & Sons and Lee Ho Fook in Melbourne have custom-made Hank pieces on the table. Hank's first product, Forbes, is a hand-moulded pepper mill made of concrete, brass and timber; and its sidekick, Ike, is a salt bowl.

Why the decision to design a pepper mill, Breeze?

They're either expensive or quite ugly, so we knew there was space for a pepper grinder that was a bit different.

What's the Hank production line like?

Christian is an industrial designer and has designed each and every piece that goes into the pepper mill. We don't turn the wood ourselves but we do make the moulds, mix and pour the concrete, and sand and assemble them. Because we do all that by hand in our shed, we can only make so many at a time.

Talk us through your choice of materials, Christian.

They're architectural, balanced and tactile, the concrete especially – it's quite tricky. I love doing something that I can't YouTube how to do. I just do it a hundred times over to understand what works and what doesn't.

Why the name Hank?

We like to name all of our products in a way that gives them an instant personality. We imagine Hank as a Swedish craftsman who moved to America in the mid-century and loved to make things by hand. *Forbes pepper mill and Ike salt bowl, \$250 a set. hank.com.au*

MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



BUDDHA'S HAND

This freakishly shaped fruit, aka fingered citron, hails from the citrus family. "Its texture is like an apple," says Mike Eggert, of Sydney's Pinbone, "but with the mouthfeel of fresh carrot, and there isn't any moisture like other citrus." He throws Buddha's hand into a dish of squid legs fried with lardo and crisp pork skin. Dan Pepperell, of 10 William Street, serves it candied alongside nashi pear and Holy Goat La Luna cheese. "The zest of the fruit has a vibrant and unique citrus flavour, but the pith remains quite bitter," he says. "You can slice the fingers thinly and use them raw in salads, as a garnish for crudo dishes, grate the zest onto a dessert or finish a rich sauce."

PHOTOGRAPHY WILL HORNER (HANK), CHRIS CHEN (BUDDHA'S HANDS) SCOTT HAWKINS (ANCHOVIES), RODNEY MACUJA (STOCK), KRISTINA SOLJO (JAY OSGERBY) STYLING AIMEE JONES (STOCK)



FISHY BUSINESS *Anchovies from Santoña in northern Spain are widely regarded as the finest in the world – and you won't need to book a holiday for a taste. Bottega Rotolo is importing the Catalina brand for \$9.95 a tin. bottegarotolo.com.au*



REWIND

IN August
2002...

WE COOKED

Stephanie's seven-hour
leg of lamb with
anchovy and garlic



WE TOURED

Cairo



WE ATE

"Paella" at Solitary in the
Blue Mountains, NSW

WOK THIS WAY

How well do the Swedes know their wok cooking? Judging by Asko's new Fusion Volcano burner, surprisingly well. It's super-advanced for the domestic sphere, with a conical flame that generates powerful heat with minimal fuss and flaring (in other words, you're highly unlikely to burn down your house). It costs from \$1899 on its own, or bundled with Asko gas or induction cooktops. www.asko.com.au



GAME OF BONES

We're all for homemade stock. But game stock? That's a whole different beast. Maggie Beer has gone to the trouble of simmering kangaroo and venison bones to create a rich flavoursome broth (\$9.49 for 500ml) that's a perfect foundation for winter dishes. maggiebeer.com.au



CREATION THEORY

Jay Osgerby and a jug from Royal Doulton's commemorative Olio collection; inset, Olio jug.



MILESTONES

Royal special issue

Better than a letter from the Queen, Royal Doulton is celebrating its bicentenary with a new designer range.

Though Barber & Osgerby and Royal Doulton were founded well over a century apart in London, their mutual recognition of quality design has drawn them together. To create a commemorative range for its bicentenary, Royal Doulton commissioned "the two best designers in the UK right now", according to design director Dik Delaney.

The design duo of Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby has produced Olio, a tableware collection that pays tribute to Royal Doulton's unique design heritage. The 40-item collection of cutlery, and serving and tabletop items is fashioned in ceramic, stainless steel and wood, as well as glazed and unglazed clays. The pair has also created a commemorative matt-black stoneware vase inspired by the interlocking salt-glazed clay pipes that Henry Doulton designed in the 1840s, which later served as the foundation for underground sanitation in London. "We knew we weren't going to be reinventing the wheel with the shapes," Osgerby says, "but this is more about the history."

Delaney, who has been with Doulton for almost 25 years, couldn't be happier with the partnership. "We do what we do very well," he says, "but when you invite someone from a different industry or discipline, you get an exciting new perspective."

Barber & Osgerby limited-edition Pipe Vase for Royal Doulton, \$249; pieces in its Olio collection start at \$15.95, wwrd.com.au MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



TEST KITCHENS Chef Jock Zonfrillo of Adelaide's Orana is stepping in front of the camera as the host of new reality TV show Restaurant Revolution, now airing on Channel Seven. It follows five teams of aspiring restaurateurs as they design and run the pop-up restaurant of their dreams.



CALENDAR

TAPAS ON TOP

Think tapas are best enjoyed in warm weather? Think again. Join MoVida chef Frank Camorra at Harvey Norman Chadstone on 19 August for a **Gourmet Institute** masterclass on warming winter tapas. Tickets are \$60 at eventopia.co/gourmetinstitute.

VINO-FIED

The **Sydney Italian Wine & Food Festival** roars back into Town Hall on Sunday 30 August. Everybody's favourite celebration of everything from Italy you can stick in your mouth again features our own Max Allen in the wine masterclasses alongside Huon Hooke, with chefs from Pilu, LuMi, Ormezzio and Acme doing their thing. sydneyitalianwinefood.com.au

HONEST TO GOODNESS

Beerenberg turns its attention to Australian farmers on 18 and 19 August with *The Honesty Box*, a **photography exhibition** hosted by **The Grounds of Alexandria** in Sydney, aimed at raising funds for the Aussie Farmers Foundation. beerenberg.com.au/104/Rural-Provenance-Project



TRIPLE THE FUN
Cormac Bradfield, photographed at Gauge.

ON THE PASS

Cormac Bradfield, Sourced Grocer

You're heading up three venues. How's it going?

I've got the best job. It's giving me an outlet for all sorts of creative thinking and enormous freedom to do more with the food than I've been doing at Sourced Grocer. With Gauge, our South Brisbane café, I get to experiment. Then with Maker, our Fish Lane bar around the corner, it's another opportunity to push myself and my thinking to the limit.

How would you describe what you're doing at Gauge and Maker?

I couldn't really label what we do at Gauge, we're just trying to take the time to have thought behind each dish and to execute it beautifully. At Maker, it's all about honouring the space, which is simple and elegant.

Gauge's black-garlic breakfast bread with brown butter and burnt vanilla has got people talking.

It's intended to be a sweet dish but some people see it as savoury. It's nice that it's making people think and getting them to try something different.

Going into spring what will be rocking your menus?

Asparagus is always high on the list, and peas and beans will always be on the menu. I'm excited about the new-season bottarga and we've got some buffalo from the Northern Territory which I haven't used before. *Sourced Grocer*, 11 Florence St, Teneriffe, Qld, (07) 3852 6734, sourcedgrocer.com.au; *Gauge*, 77 Grey St, South Brisbane, Qld; *Maker*, Fish La, South Brisbane, Qld. FIONA DONNELLY



GREEK CULTURE *Dodoni is famous for its feta, but we're more in love with its new Greek yoghurt (\$6.99 for 1kg), the thickest and creamiest we've tasted on our shores.*

PRO CHOICE

No time to shop? No problem. Sydney's ready-to-cook meal delivery service **The Cook's Grocer** brings restaurant-quality meals to home kitchens with monthly chef collaborations. In August, it's Efendy's Somer Sivrioglu sharing his recipe for chicken kebabs with prune orzo pilav. Each kit (from \$24 for two serves) comes with ingredients and cooking instructions. thecooksgrocer.com.au



EFENDY'S CHICKEN KEBABS

PHOTOGRAPHY AJ MOLLER (ON THE PASS), CHICKEN KEBABS FROM ANATOLIA (MURDOCH BOOKS), SCOTT HAWKINS (SAUCE), RODNEY MACUJA (SIGNATURE DRINK) STYLING AIMEE JONES (SIGNATURE DRINK). ALL PROPS STYLIST'S OWN



SAUCE CODE

Chicago barbecue restaurant Lillie's Q produces a range of Southern-style sauces, now available here, \$17.95 each. productdistribution.com.au



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SIGNATURE DRINK

Molly's Port Side Flip

Porter syrup and a whole egg make a smooth, rich winter winner.

This drink is "almost like a chocolate Egg Nog", says Molly's Sam Carlini. The trick to nailing it at home, he says, is to make sure it's well-strained with no little bits of ice. For the porter syrup, he brings a bottle of Anchor Steam beer to the boil, then adds 200 grams of demerara sugar and reduces the liquid by half. He advises letting the syrup cool before using it in the cocktail to avoid cooking the egg. *Molly, Hobart Pl, Canberra, ACT, molly.net.au*

> Chill your glass. Pour 45ml Flor de Caña 7 rum, 15ml demerara sugar syrup, 10ml crème de cacao, 30ml porter beer reduction, and a whole egg into a shaker. Shake the ingredients without ice, then

add ice and shake again. Double strain the cocktail into your chilled glass through a Hawthorne strainer and a tea strainer. Garnish with a line of grated nutmeg and serve.



MOLLY'S PORT SIDE FLIP

GOURMET TRAVELLER HOT PLATES

Our restaurant critics' picks of the latest and best eats, updated weekly on our website:

gourmettraveller.com.au

MELBOURNE

Ladro Greville, the southside outpost of Ladro's, has changed name and focus. Now called **Ladro Tap**, it's all about craft beer and beer-focused food. A dozen new beer taps feature a changing selection of craft beer, and while the kitchen still pumps out its (rightly) famed pizze, it has widened its Italian focus to include snacks such as an excellent Welsh rarebit. Even better, most dishes come in under \$20.

LONDON

British chef Sat Bains has launched a "restaurant within a restaurant" called **Nucleus** at his acclaimed two-star fine-diner, **Restaurant Sat Bains**. The inner sanctum seats only six and has private and behind-the-scenes access to the kitchen. Nucleus has a seven-course tasting menu at lunch and 10 courses at dinner, featuring dishes exclusive to the six-seater as well as classics from the restaurant.

YARRA VALLEY

Perth chef Matt Stone, who made his name at the head-turning sustainable eatery Greenhouse, is taking over the restaurant at **Oakridge Wines** in



MATT STONE

Coldstream. The site will feature a "full-on" kitchen garden, with a menu drawing exclusively on produce from the valley. Stone jumps behind the pans this month and Greenhouse partner and architect Joost Bakker is making changes to the room. The full relaunch is scheduled for September.

PERTH

The countdown has begun to the October opening of **Long Chim**, David Thompson's first Australian restaurant since the Thai food champion left Sydney in 2000. Based in the new State Buildings precinct, Long Chim will follow the lead of Thompson's Singaporean restaurant of the same name and serve unexpurgated Thai cuisine; expect pungent chilli relishes, serious curries and complex stir-fries.

Candleholders

Nothing sets the mood for dinner like the enchanting glow of candlelight.

1 Nocto candlestick in Rose, \$35, with Ester & Erik candle, \$11.20 for 2, from Nordic Fusion. **2** Glass tealight holder, \$35, from Parterre, with "Glimma" unscented tealight in metal cup, \$7.99 for 24, from Ikea. **3** Menu marble and copper candleholder, \$149.95, from Nordic Fusion, with "Jubla" unscented candle, \$7.99 for

8, from Ikea. **4** "Ersätta" 11cm candleholder, \$9.99, with "Fenomen" unscented block candle, \$9.99 for 5, from Ikea. **5** Skultana "Kin" candleholder, \$99 (set of 3), from Nordic Fusion, with "Glimma" unscented tealight in metal cup, \$7.99 for 24, from Ikea. **6** Claro Quartz candlestick, \$1145 (set of 3), from Becker

Minty, with Dibbern candle in Blue, \$4, from Top3 by Design. **7** Geometric brass candleholder, \$245 (set of 3), from Becker Minty, with "Jubla" unscented candle, \$7.99 for 8, from Ikea. **8** "Supernova" small silver candleholder, \$85, from Georg Jensen. **9** Eva Solo glass lantern, \$85, from Top3 by Design, with

"Glimma" unscented tealight in metal cup, \$7.99 for 24, from Ikea. **10** "Mercury" candleholder, \$6, from West Elm, with "Glimma" unscented tealight in metal cup, \$7.99 for 24, from Ikea. **11** Medium pierced metal lantern, \$24, from West Elm, with "Glimma" unscented tealight in metal cup, \$7.99 for 24, from Ikea. ●



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CONTACT

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Monster's ball

Secure your place for dinner at the mighty Monster in Canberra's hottest hotel. It's one you won't want to miss.

Sean McConnell's restaurant, in Canberra's benchmark Hotel Hotel, is more than living up to its name. "We called it Monster not quite knowing how appropriate that name would become," he says. "It's a big one."

It's big on character, big on ideas and even bigger on diners – McConnell and his crew cater to walk-ins as well as guests at the hotel, *Gourmet Traveller* Boutique Hotel of the Year, plus there's a solid room-service offering from the same kitchen.

McConnell and the Hotel Hotel team have steered clear of typical hotel food, serving vibrant, imaginative, tasty dishes. "We wanted to push the boundaries," he says. "It's the sort of menu you could sit and graze from for hours."

For this month's Fine Dining Lovers reader dinner, McConnell presents a menu off the pages of *Gourmet Traveller* (see page 94), starting with South Coast oysters, followed by a bright plate of kingfish crudo with burnt ruby grapefruit and lightly pickled fennel, and the Monster jaffle, rich with poached yabby meat. A Turkish-inspired sticky braised lamb shoulder is the main event, while a strawberry, rhubarb and pink peppercorn crumble ends things on a spicy-sweet high.

"A dish needs to have various elements of texture, temperature and colour, but it also has to be delicious," says McConnell. Delicious indeed. See you there. ●

Join us for dinner at 6.30pm on Monday 24 August at Monster, NewActon Nishi, 25 Edinburgh Ave, Canberra, ACT. The cost of \$120 per person includes eight courses, wines by the glass, S.Pellegrino water and a \$10 donation to the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation. To book, call (02) 6287 6287. For more on the OCRF, call 1300 OVARIAN or visit ocrf.com.au.

AMAZING GRAZE

Above from left: Monster's dining room; chef Sean McConnell; celeriac, Jerusalem artichokes, puffed rice and parmesan.

MONSTER

- * A selection of South Coast oysters
 - * Kingfish crudo, burnt ruby grapefruit, pickled fennel, anchovy
- 2015 Eden Road Canberra Riesling

- * Yabby jaffle, horseradish, crème fraîche
 - * Mulloway, broad beans, peas, almond cream, mojama
- 2013 Collector Lamp Lit Marsanne

- * Roast beetroot, shankleesh, almond, onion and dill
 - * Celeriac, Jerusalem artichokes, puffed rice, parmesan
 - * Slow-roasted lamb shoulder, pistachio, pomegranate, yoghurt, vine leaves, brik
- 2013 Clonakilla O'Riada Shiraz

- * Rhubarb, strawberry and pink peppercorn crumble with chamomile ice-cream
- 2013 Lerida Estate Botrytis Pinot Gris

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CHINESE SPICE

It's getting hot in here with our collection of spicy Chinese recipes. From mapo doufu to bang bang chicken and Naxi pork ribs with chillies and cumin – one bite is all it takes to warm up your winter.

GOURMET
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**HOT
PLATES**

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FRIED CHICKEN HEAVEN

Nothing says finger-lickin' good times more than a plateful of fried chicken. Head online for more than a dozen of our favourites.



SLOW AND LOW

It's cold out, so tuck in to some comfort food. Find our favourite slow-cooked dishes online – we're talking braised chickpeas with cavolo nero and slow-roasted pork or duck.

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GOOD GOURD

From savoury soups to sweet pastries, our line-up of pumpkin recipes shows just how versatile the humble gourd can be.



Video

Emma Knowles makes the rhubarb and strawberry lattice pie on our cover, Greg Llewellyn of Hartsyard fries chicken and Mat Pember talks about making compost.

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in this issue



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SCOOP Check out our restaurant critics' hot new picks. Turn to **page 27**.

SHOP Keep it quick and easy. See **page 49** for a shopping list for our Gourmet Fast recipes and pick up our Gourmet Fast App with up to 140 recipes.

CONNECT Get the full menus or contact this month's reviewed restaurants, Melbourne's O My (**page 61**) and Besser in Sydney (**page 66**), at the touch of a fingertip.

BOOK Secure your place at this month's reader dinner at Monster, Canberra (**page 30**).

WATCH Emma Knowles makes the rhubarb and strawberry lattice pie on our cover (**page 178**), Hartsyard's Greg Llewellyn cooks the perfect fried chicken (**page 112**) and The Little Veggie Patch Co's Mat Pember makes compost.



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FRANK CAMORRA

The nation's most respected Spanish chef shares some winter favourites: calamari cooked in olive oil with beetroot salad, and stingray in a saffron and cumin sauce.

EVENT

6

August

19

MELBOURNE



EVENT DETAILS

CHEF
FRANK CAMORRA

TOPIC
WINTER TAPAS

LOCATION
HARVEY NORMAN CHADSTONE,
699 WARRIGAL RD,
CHADSTONE, VIC

DATE & TIME
7PM, WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST

TICKETS
\$60 EACH

TO BOOK
EVENTOPIA.CO/
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WINTER TAPAS *with* **Frank Camorra** **MOVIDA**

*There's much more to the world of tapas than summer fun.
Pull the cork on a good bottle or two, fire up the stove, gather
some friends and get ready for some Spanish-inspired fun.*

The blazing beaches of the Costa Brava. The sultry backstreets of Cádiz. Sweltering nights in Ibiza. All very well, but all a world away from Melbourne in winter. Luckily Frank Camorra has come to the rescue, reminding us that tapas are a year-round pleasure that changes with the seasons in Spain just like everything

else. The MoVida chef draws on recipes from all over his much-loved restaurant empire to bring you a take on the humble tapa that will warm the cockles and put a smile on your face. Calamari cooked in olive oil with a spiced beetroot salad? Hola! Stingray in saffron and cumin sauce? Where do we sign up?

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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EVENT

7

Sept

09

SYDNEY

GUILLAUME BRAHIMI

Whether it's the classic steak frites or a passionfruit soufflé, Guillaume Brahimi's command of technique and obsession with fine produce come up trumps.

PARIS IN THE SPRINGTIME *with*

Guillaume Brahimi

GUILLAUME

Paris in the springtime? What's not to love? Guillaume Brahimi channels the bistro cooking of his heartland to bring you food that's both smart and satisfying.

With restaurants in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, Guillaume Brahimi's reach across Australia is broad, yet at his new headquarters, Guillaume, in Sydney's leafy inner-eastern Paddington, it's all about intimacy. It's a restaurant where careful cooking and quality produce loom large, and attention to detail, both on the plate

and in the work of his team on the floor, is something to savour. In this session, Brahimi applies that same care to mighty tasty bistro classics such as steak frites and soufflé (given a springy twist with passionfruit) and vanilla anglaise. Two more great reasons to love Paris in the springtime, even from afar.

FOR THE RECIPES FROM THIS EVENT
VISIT HN.COM.AU/GOURMET-INSTITUTE

**EVENT DETAILS**

CHEF
GUILLAUME BRAHIMI

TOPIC
PARIS IN THE SPRINGTIME

LOCATION
HARVEY NORMAN @ DOMAYNE,
84 O'RIORDAN ST,
ALEXANDRIA, NSW

DATE & TIME
7PM, WEDNESDAY 09 SEPT

TICKETS
\$60 EACH

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Fare exchange

Recipes you've requested from Australia's leading restaurants.

PROVENANCE Kimchi and cheese jaffles

MARY'S Maltagliati with braised oxtail in black vinegar

BAR ALTO Mussels with chilli, garlic and white wine

YELLOW Liquorice bread

Provenance's kimchi and
cheese jaffles (RECIPE P40)

REQUEST A RECIPE



To request a recipe, write to
Fare Exchange, *Australian Gourmet Traveller*,
GPO Box 4088, Sydney, NSW 2001, or
email fareexchange@bauer-media.com.au.
Please include the restaurant's name and
address or business card, as well as your
name and address.

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Polka Indigo canvas
(at front) from
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from Studio Enti.
Eames chair in
walnut (used
throughout) from

Living Edge. Prarie
floorboards (used
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Lights (used
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Stockists p175.

Mary's maltagliati with
braised oxtail in black
vinegar (RECIPE P42)



CHEFS' RECIPES

"Bar Alto's pots of sweet, succulent mussels in chilli sparked tomato broth with slices of perfectly oiled and char-grilled ciabatta have caused such a stir they've introduced an 'order it 10 times; get the recipe' rule. I reckon, between us, Gourmet readers must've well and truly met the requirement."

Phil Hambling, Spring Hill, Old

Mussels with chilli, garlic and white wine

Prep time 20 mins, cook 15 mins

Serves 4

- 4 Roma tomatoes
- 50 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp finely chopped garlic
- 1 tsp finely chopped fresh birdseye chilli
- 2 kg mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 250 ml dry white wine
- 800 gm canned tomato polpa or chopped canned tomatoes
- ¼ cup each flat-leaf parsley and basil, coarsely chopped, plus extra to serve

Toasted ciabatta, drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil, to serve

- 1** Bring a small saucepan of water to the boil. Make a small cross incision on the base of each tomato and blanch until skin starts to peel off (30–40 seconds; see cook's notes p184), then place in iced water, peel off skin and coarsely chop tomatoes, discarding seeds.
- 2** Combine extra-virgin olive oil, garlic and chilli in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add mussels and wine, cover with a lid and shake occasionally until mussels open (2–3 minutes). Strain, reserving liquid, and arrange mussels on a platter. Return liquid to saucepan over high heat, add chopped tomato and canned polpa, and bring to the boil. Add herbs, then pour over mussels. Season to taste, scatter with extra herbs and serve with toasted ciabatta.

"Provenance's kimchi jaffles are fantastic. I'd like to try them at home. Would you ask for the recipe?"

Max Bromwell, Albert Park, Vic

Kimchi and cheese jaffles

Start this recipe at least a week ahead to ferment the kimchi. Otherwise use shop-bought kimchi instead.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 10 mins (plus fermenting)

Makes 4 (pictured p38)

- 8 slices thick white bread
- 125 gm butter, softened
- 100 gm each mozzarella and cheddar, grated
- Kimchi**
- 2 tsp (10gm) fine sea salt
- 300 gm Chinese cabbage, cut into 5cm squares
- 90 gm spring onions (about ¼ bunch), cut into 5cm lengths
- 12 gm ginger, finely grated
- 3 small garlic cloves, crushed
- ¼ carrot, cut into julienne
- ¼ daikon, peeled and halved lengthways, cut into 5mm slices
- 2 tsp dried shrimp (see note), coarsely chopped
- 1½ tbsp mild Korean chilli powder, or to taste (see note)
- ½ tsp caster sugar
- 1½ tbsp fish sauce

1 For kimchi, place 2 litres water and 1½ tsp salt in a large bowl and stir to dissolve salt. Place cabbage in a 600ml (about 2½-cup) non-reactive container, pour brine over to cover, weight with a plate and set aside at room temperature until starting to ferment (12–36 hours; the liquid will bubble a little and the cabbage will become slightly sour). Drain cabbage, reserving brine, and combine with remaining ingredients and remaining salt in a large bowl. Transfer to a 500ml (2-cup) sterilised jar and pour reserved brine over to cover. Pour some of the remaining brine into a zip-lock bag, seal and place on top of cabbage to keep it submerged. Set aside in a cool place (no more than 20C) to ferment until it tastes to your liking (up to 2 weeks). Remove zip-lock bag, seal jar and refrigerate. Kimchi will keep refrigerated for 3 months.

2 Heat a jaffle maker. Butter both sides of bread slices, place half the slices butter-side down on a sheet of baking paper, cover each with a mixture of both cheeses and 2 tbsp kimchi and sandwich with remaining slices. Cook in jaffle maker until cheese has melted and the corners are slightly charred (3–5 minutes) and serve.

Note Korean chilli powder (gochugaru) and dried shrimp are available from Asian grocers. >



MUSSELS Polka Indigo canvas from Walter-G. Copper basket from Robert Gordon. Bowl (at front) from Studio Enti. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Bar Alto's mussels with chilli, garlic and white wine

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CHEFS' RECIPES

"Would you please beg Yellow to share its recipe for the gorgeous salty liquorice bread?"

Jacqui Warner-Smith, Warners Bay, NSW

Liquorice bread

Prep time 10 mins, cook 1½ hrs

Serves 6

- 2 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 200 gm caster sugar
- 65 gm dark muscovado sugar
- ½ tsp ground star anise
- 150 gm golden syrup
- 100 ml vegetable oil
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) beetroot juice (see note)
- 200 gm (1½ cups) self-raising flour
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 3 gm (3 tsp) vegetable ash (see note)
- Whipped cultured butter (see note) and salt flakes, to serve

Liquorice stock

- 3 star anise
- 3 gm (1 piece) liquorice root

Liquorice purée

- 100 gm soft black liquorice, finely sliced

1 For liquorice stock, place ingredients and 500ml water in a saucepan, bring to the boil and continue to boil until mixture has reduced to about 150ml (10-12 minutes). Strain through a fine sieve into a container and set aside.

2 For liquorice purée, place liquorice and 75ml of water in a saucepan over very low heat and stir, adding a little more water if necessary, until liquorice dissolves (8-10 minutes). Transfer to a blender and purée until smooth, then pass through a fine sieve and set aside.

3 For liquorice bread, preheat oven to 180C. Butter an 8cm x 30cm loaf pan and line with baking paper. Place eggs, yolk, sugars and ground star anise in an electric mixer and whisk until pale. Add golden syrup, vegetable oil, liquorice purée and liquorice stock and whisk to combine. Add beetroot juice, then sift in flour, bicarbonate of soda, ash and ¼ tsp salt and continue whisking until combined. Spoon the mixture into prepared tin and bake until risen and cooked through (50 minutes to 1 hour). Cool completely in tin.

4 Remove bread from tin, trim sides, cut in half lengthways and each half into thirds crossways. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat and fry each portion until slightly crisp on each side (2-3 minutes). Serve with whipped cultured butter and salt flakes.

Note You'll need to juice 1 large beetroot (about 200gm) for this recipe (or buy it from your local juice shop). Vegetable ash is available online from cheesemaking supply shops such as cheesemaking.com.au. Yellow makes its own cultured butter, but Pepe Saya's, available from select delicatessens and specialist food stores (pepesaya.com.au), is an excellent substitute. Liquorice root is available from Asian grocers and online at herbies.com.au.



BREAD Brett Stone bowl from Claypool. Entrée plates from Studio Enti. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

"Whenever I visit Perth, I have the pasta and oxtail dish at Mary's. May I please have the recipe?"

Sally Bourke, Hunters Hill, NSW

Maltagliati with braised oxtail in black vinegar

Prep time 20 mins, cook 3½ hrs

Serves 4 (pictured p39)

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1.2 kg oxtail, trimmed and cut into 5cm portions
- 1.5 litres (6 cups) beef stock
- 100 ml each Chinkiang black vinegar and Pun Chun sweet vinegar (see note)
- 2 each star anise and cinnamon quill
- 1 piece of orange peel
- 750 gm fresh lasagne sheets, torn
- 50 gm butter, chopped
- 1 bunch chives, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

1 Preheat oven to 140C. Heat olive oil in a casserole over medium-high heat and sear oxtail in batches until golden brown on all sides. Return all oxtail to pan, add beef stock, bring to a simmer, then cover pan and place in oven until meat is falling off the bone (2½ -3½ hours, depending on size). Strain, reserving oxtail and returning liquid to casserole, then add vinegars, spices and orange peel. Heat over medium-high heat until reduced by about three-quarters (20-25 minutes), then strain and discard solids. Meanwhile, shred meat from bone, add to stock and keep warm.

2 Cook pasta in plenty of salted boiling water until al dente, add to meat mixture along with butter and toss to combine. Divide among plates, scatter with chives and sesame seeds and serve.

Note Chinkiang vinegar, a Chinese black rice vinegar, and Pun Chun sweet vinegar are available from Asian grocers. ●

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A close-up, low-angle shot of a jeweler's hands working on a ring. The jeweler is using a torch to heat a small ring held in a pair of tweezers. The background is dark and out of focus, showing various tools and a workbench. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands and the ring.

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Quick meals

Cosy comfort food can be whipped up in no time with these midweek meals from **Emma Knowles**.

- 1 Braised kale with mascarpone polenta
- 2 Broccoli soup with crème fraîche and hazelnuts
- 3 Spiced lamb with warm carrot and freekeh salad
- 4 Thyme and garlic roast chicken with Brussels sprouts slaw
- 5 Cheddar and provolone toasties with quick-pickled onion
- 6 Soba noodles with miso flank steak, soy and mushrooms
- 7 Smoked trout omelette
- 8 Chinese-style stir-fried pork and beans
- 9 Ricotta hotcakes with apple and honey



1 Braised kale
with mascarpone
polenta (RECIPE P46)

KALE Platter from Studio Enti. Plate (top of stack) from MH Ceramics. Leather placemat from Saint Crispin. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

1 Braised kale with mascarpone polenta

This is a beautifully hearty vegetarian dish, but if you're feeling more carnivorous, you could add some good pork sausage to the mix – squeeze a couple of sausages out of their skins, break into chunks and add to the pan when the onion is almost cooked.

Serves 4 (pictured p45)

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dried chilli flakes
- 1 bunch kale, stalks discarded, leaves torn
- 250 ml (1 cup) tomato passata
- 200 ml vegetable or chicken stock
- 120 gm instant polenta
- 200 gm mascarpone
- 100 gm parmesan, finely grated, plus extra to serve

1 Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, add onion, garlic and dried chilli and sauté until onion is tender (4–5 minutes). Add kale, passata and stock, bring to a simmer and cook until kale is tender (3–4 minutes). Remove from heat and season to taste.

2 Meanwhile, bring 800ml water to the boil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, gradually add polenta, whisking to combine, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thick (2–3 minutes). Stir in mascarpone and parmesan and season to taste. Serve topped with kale and parmesan.

2 Broccoli soup with crème fraîche and hazelnuts

This bright-green soup is great to have on stand-by in the freezer for those nights when you just don't feel like cooking, so make a double batch and feel suitably well-prepared.

Serves 4

- 30 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 leek, coarsely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 large floury potato (200 gm), such as sebago, grated
- Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon
- 500 ml (2 cups) vegetable or chicken stock
- 250 gm broccoli (1 small head), chopped

- 1½ cups (firmly packed) English spinach
- Crème fraîche, to serve
- Hazelnut-garlic butter**
- 40 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- 30 gm roasted hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
- ½ small garlic clove, finely chopped
- Finely grated rind and juice of ½ lemon

1 Heat butter and oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat until butter foams, add leek and garlic and sauté until tender (3–4 minutes). Stir in potato and rind, then add stock and 250ml water, season to taste, bring to the boil and cook covered until mixture thickens (2–3 minutes). Add broccoli and simmer until tender (4–5 minutes).

2 Meanwhile, for hazelnut-garlic butter, heat butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until foaming, add hazelnuts, garlic and rind and cook until fragrant (1–2 minutes). Remove from heat, season to taste and stir in lemon juice.

3 Add spinach to soup mixture, remove from heat, blend with a hand-held blender and season to taste with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Serve topped with a dollop of crème fraîche and warm hazelnut-garlic butter.

3 Spiced lamb with warm carrot and freekeh salad

With speediness in mind, we've opted for lamb backstrap here, but when you have more time, the salad would work equally well with a slow-roasted lamb shoulder.

Serves 4

- 100 gm cracked freekeh
- 1 tsp each ground cumin, ground coriander and ground chilli, plus extra to serve
- 4 lamb backstraps (200gm each), at room temperature
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 3 carrots, cut into julienne
- 1 Spanish onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 cup coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Finely grated rind of 1 lemon, juice of 2
- 100 gm hulled tahini
- 2 tbsp natural yoghurt

1 Preheat oven to 200C. Cook freekeh in a saucepan of boiling salted water until tender (8–10 minutes), drain and set aside.

2 Meanwhile, combine spices in a bowl with ½ tsp salt, then rub over lamb well. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large ovenproof frying pan over medium-high heat, brown lamb all over (2–3 minutes), then roast in oven until cooked to your liking (4–5 minutes for medium-rare). Transfer to a plate to rest, return pan to the heat, add remaining oil, then carrot, onion and half the garlic and sauté until just tender (2–3 minutes). Toss with the freekeh, parsley, rind, half the juice and season to taste.

3 Combine tahini, yoghurt, remaining garlic, remaining lemon juice and 60ml hot water in a bowl and season to taste. Serve on spiced lamb and salad with a scattering of extra spices.

4 Thyme and garlic roast chicken with Brussels sprouts slaw

Serves 4

- 2 tsp finely chopped oregano and thyme
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon
- 2½ tbsp olive oil
- 8 skinless chicken thigh fillets (about 120gm each)
- 4 rindless bacon rashers, coarsely chopped
- 60 ml dry white wine
- 150 ml chicken stock
- Brussels sprouts slaw**
- 2 tbsp cider vinegar, or to taste
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 golden shallot, thinly sliced
- ½ garlic clove, finely chopped
- 350 gm Brussels sprouts, finely sliced
- 60 ml (¼ cup) olive oil
- 40 gm finely grated parmesan

1 Preheat oven to 200C. Combine herbs, garlic, rind and 1½ tbsp oil in a bowl and season to taste. Place chicken skin-side down on a work surface and spread herb mixture over. Roll loosely and secure with toothpicks.

2 Heat remaining oil in a large ovenproof frying pan over medium-high heat, add bacon and stir occasionally until starting to brown (1–2 minutes), then transfer to a plate. Add chicken and brown well all over (2–3 minutes), then return bacon to pan, add wine and simmer until reduced by half (1–2 minutes). Add stock, season to taste, bring to the boil, then transfer to oven to cook through (2–3 minutes).

3 For Brussels sprouts slaw, combine vinegar, lemon juice, shallot and garlic in a large bowl, season to taste and set aside for shallot to soften (1–2 minutes). Add Brussels sprouts, oil and parmesan, toss to combine and serve alongside chicken, bacon and pan juices.>

SOUP Bowl (front) from The Fortynine Studio. Bowl (back) from MH Ceramics. Pink bowl from Kaz Ceramics. Salt dish from Susan Frost. Shibori wallpaper (used throughout). Leather runner from Saint Crispin.

LAMB Plate (top) from The Fortynine Studio. Plate (middle) from Studio Enti. Plate (bottom) from Malcolm Greenwood. Stool from Pure and General. Pink bowl from Susan Frost. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

2 Broccoli soup with crème fraîche and hazelnuts

3 Spiced lamb with warm carrot and freekeh salad



4 Thyme and garlic roast chicken with Brussels sprouts slaw

TOASTIES Plate from MH Ceramics. **CHICKEN** Baking dish from MH Ceramics. Napkin from Pure and General. Plates (centre and bottom of stack) from Studio Enti. Plate (top of stack) from The Fortynine Studio.

TEXT PAGE Bench from The Design Hunter. Shibori tablecloth as wall hanging. Plates from Malcolm Greenwood. Lamp from Studio Enti. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

5 Cheddar and provolone toasties with quick-pickled onion (RECIPE P49)



NOODLES Robert Gordon bowl from Chef and the Cook. Napkin from Pure and General. Bench from The Design Hunter.

TROUT Platter from Chuchu. Coaster from Saint Crispin. Stool from The Design Hunter. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

6 Soba noodles with miso flank steak, soy and mushrooms



7 Smoked trout omelette

PORK Bowl from MH Ceramics. Bowl (with rice) from Studio Enti. Pink bowl from Bison Australia. **HOTCAKES** Plate from Malcolm

Greenwood. Lamp from Studio Enti. **TEXT PAGE** Leather runner from Saint Crispin. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

8 Chinese-style stir-fried pork and beans



9 Ricotta hotcakes with apple and honey



5 Cheddar and provolone toasties with quick-pickled onion

These deliciously cheesy toasties are great as is, but thickly sliced leg ham or even spicy salami would make for a tasty addition.

Makes 4 (pictured p47)

- 300 gm crème fraîche
- 150 gm each grated cheddar and provolone piccante (see note)
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 8 thick slices sourdough or rye sourdough
- 30 gm butter, diced
- Quick-pickled onion**
- 1 Spanish onion, thinly sliced into rounds
- 60 ml (¼ cup) red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp caster sugar

- 1 For quick-pickled onion, combine ingredients in a bowl, season to taste and stand until onion changes colour (8-10 minutes).
- 2 Preheat oven to 180C. Mix crème fraîche, cheeses and mustard in a bowl and season to taste. Spread over bread slices, then form stacks of 2 slices, cheese-side up. Heat butter in a large ovenproof frying pan over medium-high heat until foaming, add sandwiches and fry until golden on the bases (1-2 minutes), transfer to oven and bake until golden brown and bubbling (4-5 minutes). Serve topped with quick-pickled onion.

Note Provolone piccante is available from select delicatessens.

6 Soba noodles with miso flank steak, soy and mushrooms

Serves 4

- 400 gm piece flank steak, at room temperature
- 2 tbsp shiro miso (see note)
- 2 tbsp grapeseed or vegetable oil
- 1 tsp sesame oil, plus extra to serve
- 200 gm mixed Asian mushrooms, such as shiitake and enoki
- 1 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced, white and green parts reserved separately
- 200 gm soba noodles
- 1 tbsp soy sauce, or to taste
- Roasted sesame seeds, to serve

- 1 Brush steak with 1 tbsp miso, then drizzle with half the grapeseed oil. Heat a frying pan over medium-high heat, add steak and cook, turning occasionally, until browned and medium-rare (8-10 minutes). Transfer to a plate, cover loosely with foil and set aside for 15 minutes to rest, then thinly slice across the grain.
- 2 Add sesame oil and remaining grapeseed oil to pan, add mushrooms, ginger, garlic and white parts of spring onion and sauté until tender (2-3 minutes), then transfer to a plate.
- 3 Cook noodles according to packet instructions until al dente, drain and divide among warm bowls and top with mushrooms and steak. Meanwhile, stir remaining miso, soy sauce and 500ml water in frying pan to combine, bring to a simmer, then

pour onto noodles and serve scattered with spring onion greens and sesame seeds.

Note Shiro (white) miso paste is available from Japanese and Asian grocers.

7 Smoked trout omelette

Serves 2

- 5 eggs
- 100 gm crème fraîche
- Finely grated rind and juice of ½ lemon, or to taste, plus wedges to serve
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 20 gm butter
- 50 gm smoked trout, coarsely flaked
- ½ baby fennel bulb, thinly sliced on a mandolin, fronds reserved
- ¼ small Spanish onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup loosely packed dill sprigs
- Extra-virgin olive oil and finely chopped chives, to serve

- 1 Whisk eggs, crème fraîche and lemon rind in a bowl and season to taste. Heat olive oil and butter in a frying pan over medium-high heat until butter foams, add egg mixture and cook, pulling cooked mixture from the edges of pan to the centre, tipping pan to allow uncooked egg to run to the outside, until softly set (3-4 minutes). Remove from heat, scatter half the omelette with smoked trout, then slide the omelette out of the pan onto a warmed plate, folding it over as you go. Combine fennel, onion and dill in a bowl, season to taste, drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil and lemon juice, toss to combine and scatter onto omelette along with chives and serve with lemon wedges.

8 Chinese-style stir-fried pork and beans

Serves 4

- 300 gm baby green beans, trimmed and halved
- 60 ml (¼ cup) vegetable oil
- 4 spring onions, thinly sliced, plus extra to serve
- 2 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 300 gm minced pork
- 60 ml (¼ cup) each soy sauce and Shaoxing wine
- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 2 tsp chilli bean sauce
- 90 ml chicken stock
- 3 tsp each Chinkiang or rice vinegar and sesame oil (see note)
- Steamed jasmine rice, to serve

- 1 Preheat oven to 250C. Toss beans and 1 tbsp vegetable oil in a bowl to combine, spread on a baking tray lined with baking paper and roast until wrinkled, tender and golden (10-12 minutes).
- 2 Meanwhile, heat remaining oil in a wok or large frying pan over medium-high heat, add spring onion, ginger and garlic and stir-fry until fragrant (30 seconds), then add pork and fry, breaking up with a wooden spoon, until pork is no longer pink (2-3 minutes).

- 3 Combine soy sauce, Shaoxing, sugar and chilli bean sauce in a bowl, add to pork mixture and stir to combine, then add stock and simmer until sauce is reduced by half (3-4 minutes). Add beans, vinegar and sesame oil, toss to combine and serve with steamed jasmine rice, scattered with extra spring onion.


Note Chinkiang, a Chinese black rice vinegar, is available from Asian grocers.

9 Ricotta hotcakes with apple and honey

We've kept things simple and served these fluffy hotcakes with crunchy raw apple, but they'd also be beautiful served with a citrus salad, or with simply poached winter fruits such as quince or pear. They'd also be excellent served at breakfast or brunch with a dollop of yoghurt in place of the ice-cream.

Serves 4

- 300 gm firm ricotta
- 200 ml milk
- 70 gm caster sugar
- 50 ml buttermilk
- 50 gm melted butter
- 1 egg
- Finely grated rind of 1 orange
- 160 gm (½ cup) plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 Granny Smith apples, cut into julienne
- Vanilla ice-cream and honey, to serve

- 1 Preheat oven to 160C. Stir ricotta, milk, sugar, buttermilk, butter, egg, rind and a pinch of salt in a bowl to combine, then stir in flour and baking powder.
- 2 Heat 1 tsp of the oil in a non-stick frying pan over medium heat, add a quarter of the batter and cook until golden on the base and bubbles appear on the surface (1-2 minutes), turn and cook the other side, then place on a tray lined with baking paper in the oven to keep warm while you repeat with remaining oil and batter, wiping out pan with paper towels between batches. Serve topped with apple and ice-cream, drizzled with honey. 

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Chilli bean paste

This handy Chinese condiment is a sure-fire speedy way of adding a flavour boost to a raft of dishes.

Asian supermarkets

have a mind-boggling array of sauces and condiments and one of the biggest subsections is chilli sauces and pastes. Dear to our hearts here at *GT* and indispensable in our pantries is chilli bean paste, a richly flavoured condiment that lends a beautiful spicy complexity to all manner of Asian dishes.

There are many varieties, but here we're talking about the Chinese condiment, which delivers serious bang for your buck in the flavour stakes. The consistency varies from a thick paste to a thinner sauce, but common to them all is the use of fermented or germinated beans – soy beans or broad beans – along with chillies, oil and flavourings such as ginger, garlic and sugar (some also contain MSG, so check the labelling; the jars should have an ingredient list in English).

This remarkably tasty paste guarantees even the most humble of meals is lifted to greater heights, be it a heart-warming soup or good old scrambled eggs. The choice of chilli bean paste is very personal, and requires a bit of experimentation, so grab a couple of jars and do a taste test to find your favourite. Some are intensely flavoured and need to be treated with caution, while others are milder – Sichuan versions are widely considered to be the tastiest of the lot. Add it to dishes little by little to gauge its impact and serve extra alongside at the table.

Spicy tofu soup

Serves 4

> Heat **1 tbsp vegetable oil** in a saucepan over medium-high heat, add **2 tbsp finely grated ginger** and **2 finely chopped garlic cloves** and sauté until fragrant (1-2 minutes). Stir in **1 tbsp chilli bean paste**, then **1 litre chicken stock**, **60ml soy sauce** and **60ml Shaoxing wine**, bring to a simmer and simmer until flavours develop (4-5 minutes). Add **4 baby bok choy**, leaves separated, and simmer until just tender (2-3 minutes). Stir in **500gm diced firm tofu**, simmer to warm through and serve scattered with thinly sliced **Chinese chives**.

Beef and broccolini fried rice with chilli bean paste

Serves 4

> Heat **1½ tbsp vegetable oil** in a wok over high heat, add **200gm thinly sliced beef blade** and stir-fry to brown (1-2 minutes). Stir in **1 tbsp chilli bean paste** and **1 tbsp soy sauce**, stir-fry to combine and place in a bowl. Wipe out wok with paper towels, add **1 tbsp vegetable oil**, heat over high heat, then add **1½ bunches chopped broccolini** and stir-fry until tender (2-3 minutes), adding **1 tbsp finely grated ginger** towards the end of cooking. Add to beef. Heat another **2 tbsp oil** in the wok over high heat. Gently break up **300gm cooked rice** (leftover takeaway rice is perfect), add to wok and stir-fry, keeping the rice moving to prevent it sticking, until warmed through (2-3 minutes). Return beef mixture to pan and stir-fry until hot. Add extra **chilli bean paste** and **soy sauce** to taste, **2 thinly sliced spring onions** and

sesame oil to taste and stir-fry to combine. Season to taste and serve topped with **extra thinly sliced spring onion** and **roasted sesame seeds**.

Chilli bean and mushroom scrambled egg

Serves 4

> Heat **2 tbsp vegetable oil** in a wok or frying pan over medium-high heat, add **100gm sliced shiitake mushrooms**, **1 tbsp finely grated ginger**, **1 finely chopped garlic clove** and **thinly sliced white part of 2 spring onions**, and stir-fry until just tender (1-2 minutes). Transfer to a plate. Heat another **2 tbsp oil**, add **6 eggs** lightly whisked with **1 tbsp soy sauce** and stir-fry until scrambled. Return mushrooms to pan, add **1-2 tbsp chilli bean paste** to taste, stir to just combine and serve topped with **sliced green part of spring onions**.

Chilli bean chicken

Serves 4

> Heat **2½ tbsp vegetable oil** in a wok over high heat, add **6 skinless chicken thigh fillets cut into bite-size pieces** and stir-fry until golden brown (2-3 minutes). Set aside. Add **2 tbsp vegetable oil** to wok and when hot add **1 tbsp finely grated ginger**, **2 finely chopped garlic cloves** and **3 thinly sliced spring onions** and stir-fry until fragrant (30 seconds). Add **2 tbsp chilli bean paste**, **1 tbsp rice vinegar**, **1 tbsp Shaoxing wine**, **1 tsp caster sugar** and **1 tsp sesame oil**. Season to taste and stir-fry until fragrant (2-3 minutes). Return chicken to pan and stir-fry to coat well (2-3 minutes). Serve with **steamed jasmine rice**. ●

HOT
TIPS

+ Chilli bean paste varies in intensity and flavour brand to brand. We prefer the Fu Chi brand because it has a fresher, milder flavour than other chilli pastes and contains less preservatives.
+ To deepen the flavour of the paste, stir-fry it in a little oil before using.

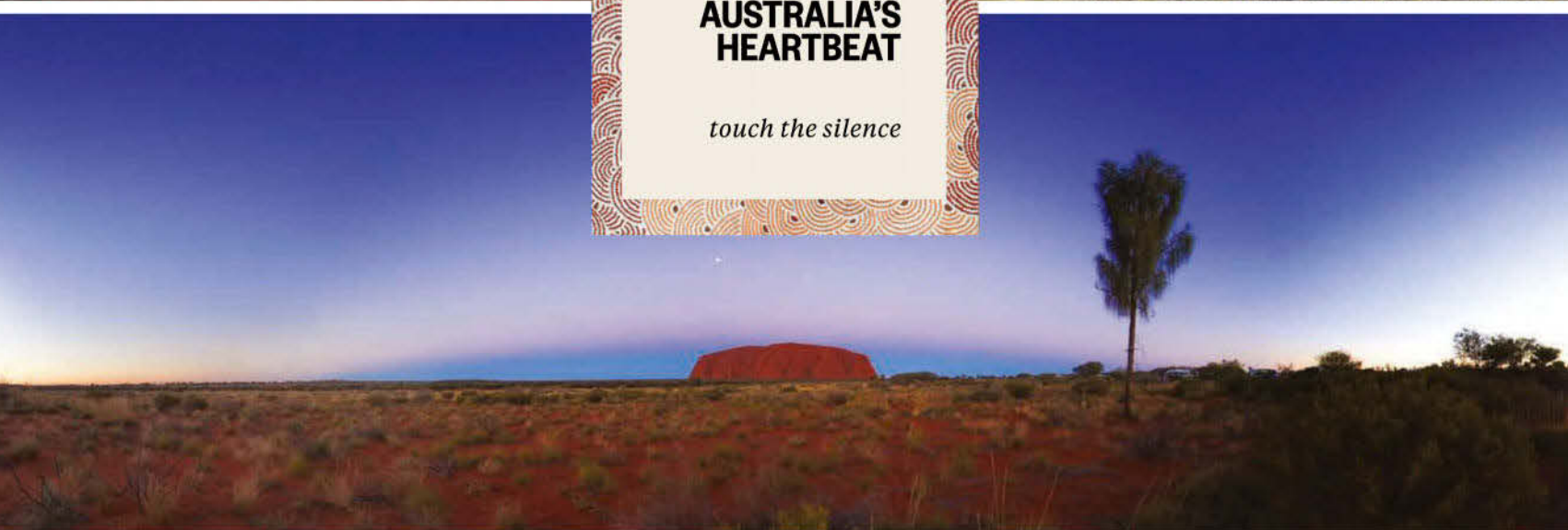
SOUP Bowl from MH Ceramics. Little dish with handle from Little White Dish. Splatter dish from Studio Enti. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Spicy tofu soup



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Caramel éclairs with chocolate glaze

These are best eaten on the day they're made, preferably as soon as they're assembled.

Prep time 40 mins, cook 45 mins (plus cooling, chilling)

Makes about 15

165 gm (¾ cup) French Caster Sugar

70 ml pouring cream

140 gm dark chocolate (55% cocoa solids), finely chopped

Caramel crème pâtissière

145 gm French Caster Sugar

450 ml milk

5 egg yolks

45 gm cornflour

60 ml (¼ cup) thickened cream, whipped to soft peaks

Choux pastry

75 gm butter, coarsely chopped

110 gm plain flour

3 eggs

1 For crème pâtissière, stir 75gm sugar and 40ml water in a saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves, bring to the boil and cook, without stirring, until caramel forms (2-4 minutes). Remove from heat, add milk (be careful, hot caramel will spit), return to heat and whisk to combine. Meanwhile, whisk yolks and remaining sugar in a bowl until pale (2-3 minutes), then whisk in cornflour. Whisk milk mixture into egg mixture, then return to pan and whisk continuously over medium heat until thick (2-3 minutes). Transfer to a bowl, cover directly with plastic wrap and refrigerate to chill. Whisk until smooth, fold in whipped cream and refrigerate.

2 For choux pastry, preheat a conventional oven to 220C. Bring butter and 185ml water to the boil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add flour and beat until thick and dough pulls away from sides of pan (1 minute). Cool (10 minutes), and add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Spoon into a piping bag with a 12mm nozzle and pipe 10cm lengths on an oven tray lined with baking paper, leaving space between each. Bake for 20 minutes, reduce heat to 180C, prick bases with a skewer and bake until golden and dry (15-20 minutes). Cool on a wire rack.

3 Meanwhile, stir sugar and 60ml water in a saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves, then cook, without stirring, until light caramel (6-8 minutes). Remove from heat, add cream and 60ml water (be careful, hot caramel will spit), add chocolate, return to heat, stir until smooth, then set aside and keep warm.

4 Halve éclairs horizontally with a bread knife, dip top in chocolate glaze and place on a tray to set. Pipe caramel crème pâtissière over éclair bases, sandwich with tops and serve.

French flavours

Desserts with that *je ne sais quoi* are just the beginning with Sugars of the World, a tantalising new collection of global tastes.

If you've ever peered in the window of a Parisian pâtisserie, or marvelled at the classic creations of French pastry chefs and wondered how they do it, then wonder no more. The secret behind delicate éclairs, mouth-watering macarons and cloud-light soufflés is here in Australia for the first time: Sugars of the World French Caster Sugar. Made from 100 per cent French sugar beets, this super-fine sugar, imported direct from Europe, is the way to truly capture the essence of high-end French desserts. Give your choux pastry treats the sweet edge they deserve with Sugars of the World.



FRENCH CASTER SUGAR is carefully diffused from the juice of the sugar beet. The super-fine, pure crystals have a well-developed sweetness with a light yet hedonistic note on the palate, making it ideal for baking. Be inspired by the top French chefs who use it to craft delicate macarons, petits fours and éclairs. If your recipes require sugar to blend, melt, fold or whip, Sugars of the World French Caster Sugar is the essential ingredient.

ENTERTAIN

1

FRENCH CLASSICS

So many of the finest French desserts rely on caster sugar for their sweetness and distinct character. Think savarin, crème brûlée, macarons, chocolate mousse and soufflés, just to name a few. With Sugars of the World French Caster Sugar you have the perfect excuse to entertain your friends and family with a delectable array of traditional desserts.

3

PRETTY PETITS FOURS

Beyond the delights of macarons lie a range of glacé (glazed) and sec (dry) confectionery morsels, such as meringues, puff pastries and éclairs (caster sugar is ideal for these because it dissolves so quickly). It's a great opportunity to try your hand at making choux pastry.



6

GO VINTAGE

So you're planning to whip up an assortment of soufflés? Why not search online for some vintage French ramekins? The retro designs introduce a splash of colour to the table and the patina brings a touch of authenticity to your creations.



7

BONNE NUIT

When the plates have been scraped of their last vestiges of flaky pastry or icing sugar, it's only fitting to enjoy a French digestif of Cognac, Calvados or perhaps liqueur coffee, using a dash of Armagnac.



4

IRRISISTIBLE ÉCLAIRS

As our recipe suggests, nothing screams indulgence like a fresh, chocolate-glazed éclair.

Light, sweet and impossible to resist, it's the perfect afternoon treat. Or try its choux-pastry cousins – the profiterole and St Honoré cake.

5

SIP IN STYLE

There are plenty of classic French cocktails harking back to the 1920s that require a touch of sweetness. You can start with a French 75 – a bubbly combination of gin, lemon, Champagne and sugar syrup (made with French Caster Sugar).



2

LOVING MACARONS

France is renowned for these ganache-filled treats that come in a variety of flavours and are guaranteed to tempt you as quickly as they melt in your mouth. Start with the basic almond, then try pistachio, rose and chocolate.



CHAMPAGNE FOR SUGAR

France has produced high-quality sugar from sugar beets since the early 19th century. The cool, temperate climate of eastern France is ideal for cultivating healthy sucrose-laden beets. Which is why Sugars of the World French Caster Sugar is sourced from beet fields just outside Reims, in the heart of the Champagne region.

FARM TO TABLE

When French sugar beets are harvested, usually in April, the leaves and crowns are removed, then the washed root is sliced into cossettes. These are placed in a diffuser in a nearby factory in Bazancourt, which then extracts the sucrose from the root using hot water. Impurities are removed from the raw juice before it's reduced to a thick syrup, then run through a granulator to form crystals. To achieve the correct particle size these crystals are run through a fine sieve. Voilà a super-fine caster sugar that's ideal for French desserts.

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Cold comfort

Pete Evans prepares two flavoursome dishes to ward off the last of the last of the winter chills.



GARLIC SOUP

“We’re heading towards the end of winter, but it’s still important to nourish ourselves with immune-boosting foods, and garlic is widely thought of as the ultimate super-food. It’s thought to contain properties that protect against inflammation, improve the metabolism of iron, and lower blood triglyceride and cholesterol levels. My garlic soup has almonds and eggs added, which are also a great source of calcium. I love to work with the most flavoursome part of the animal and fattier cuts, such as chicken drumsticks, are generally cheaper and higher in nutritional benefits. In my second dish, add the rich flavours of olives and capers and you have winter comfort food – and make extra to add to salads, soups, or an omelette the next day.”

Garlic soup

Prep time 20 mins, cook 50 mins

Serves 4-6

- 60 gm fat, such as chicken fat, duck fat, lard, tallow or coconut oil
 - 90 gm (about 32) garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
 - 1 onion, coarsely chopped
 - 1 leek (white part only), coarsely chopped
 - 1.5 litres (6 cups) chicken stock
 - 1 parsnip (220gm), peeled and coarsely chopped
 - 2 pinches of ground nutmeg, or to taste
 - 4 egg yolks
 - 60 ml (¼ cup) olive oil
 - 100 gm toasted natural almonds, coarsely chopped
 - 2 tbsps coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Turmeric oil**
- 1½ tbsps macadamia oil
 - ¼ tsp ground turmeric

- 1** For turmeric oil, heat macadamia oil in a saucepan over very low heat. Add ground turmeric and simmer gently until well flavoured (10 minutes; be careful not to boil). Cool completely before serving. Turmeric oil will keep in an airtight container for 2 weeks.
- 2** Heat fat or oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic, onion and leek, and sauté, stirring occasionally, until softened and fragrant (5-7 minutes). Add stock and parsnip, reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until vegetables are tender (30-35 minutes). Purée soup in a

blender or with a hand-held blender, then season to taste with nutmeg and sea salt.

3 Whisk egg yolks and olive oil in a bowl until smooth. Add a ladle of hot soup and whisk to combine, then pour egg mixture into the soup and stir gently over low heat until heated through (1-2 minutes; don’t let the soup boil or the yolks will curdle). Makes 1.75 litres.

4 To serve, ladle soup into serving bowls, sprinkle with almonds and parsley, and drizzle with turmeric oil.

Roasted chicken drumsticks with olives and capers

Prep time 20 mins, cook 40 mins (plus marinating)

Serves 4-6

- 10 chicken drumsticks (about 1.5kg)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) apple cider vinegar
- 60 gm fat, such as duck fat, tallow or coconut oil, melted
- ¼ tsp fennel seeds
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 40 gm (¼ cup) baby capers in vinegar, rinsed

- 4 fresh bay leaves
- 200 ml chicken stock
- 100 ml dry white wine
- ½ tsp sweet paprika
- 120 gm (¾ cup) pitted green olives
- ¼ cup (loosely packed) oregano leaves, to serve

1 Place drumsticks in a large bowl and season to taste. Combine vinegar, fat or oil, fennel seeds and garlic in a separate bowl and mix to combine well. Pour marinade over chicken and rub into skin. Cover with plastic wrap and stand at room temperature for 1 hour to marinate.

2 Preheat oven to 200C. Transfer chicken to a roasting pan, pour marinade over, scatter with capers and bay leaves, then pour in stock and white wine, sprinkle paprika over chicken and roast, basting occasionally, until chicken is cooked through and golden, adding olives during last 10 minutes of cooking (40-45 minutes). Season to taste, scatter with oregano and serve. **CT**



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Entrants must retain their original valid purchase receipt as proof of purchase to validate their entry. Promotion opens on 25th June and will close 23:59pm AEST on August 31st, 2015. Open to all Australian residents aged 18 years and over. One entry permitted per person. Check local stores/stockists for availability of Sugars Of The World product. The Major Prize must be redeemed in full and as a package by 10th September 2016. The Major Prize must be booked by Tuesday 10th November 2015. The winner and their companion must be 18 years and over to redeem the prize. For full terms and conditions please see <http://www.bauer-media.com.au/terms/competition-terms>. See <http://www.bauer-media.com.au/privacy.htm> for Bauer Media's Privacy Notice. If you do not want your information given to any other organisation not associated with this promotion, please indicate this clearly on your entry. The Promoter is Bauer Media Pty Ltd (ABN 18 053 273 546).



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Beef Bourguignon

So much more than a fancy stew, this is a dish that's quintessentially French, writes **Damien Pignolet**.

Great red Burgundies have refined fruitiness and delicate but complex bouquets, so it's no wonder so many famous dishes in the French repertoire come from this province: jambon persillé, coq au vin, gougères, and not least of all beef Bourguignon or boeuf à la Bourguignonne.

Both red and white wines play a major role in Burgundian cuisine. It may be as simple as adding red wine to the pan after cooking a minute steak, reducing it with shallots and beef jus, then mounting it with butter and adding parsley for a quick sauce. Coq au vin, by contrast, is a more complex dish. Fortunately, boeuf à la Bourguignonne

(or "Bourguignonne" as was the bistro title of old) is relatively simple but, like all things simple, the art is in the detail.

You need to start this gorgeous dish well ahead. It's worth making your own rich stock, which is reduced to a veal *glace*, or glaze. Ask your butcher to saw a veal shank into sections and order meaty beef bones. Roast these, then make a stock with them along with onions, carrots, celery and a bouquet garni. Cook the stock for at least eight hours (up to 14 if practicable), then strain and skim off fat, and reduce it to 20 per cent of the original quantity. Any leftover stock may be frozen for another use.

Traditional recipes call for topside or even rump steak, both of which I feel give a rather dry result (early recipes require larding the meat, when a joint is used: making incisions and inserting lardons). Chuck steak is an excellent cut to use, as is gravy beef, which produces a rich sauce (hence the name). I love oyster blade; it's a single muscle, which translates to even cooking. Another helper is the built-in treasure of a gelatinous fibre of collagen running through its centre, which adds to the body of the sauce provided the cooking is slow enough to break it down. (Most cooks think this cut is only for braising but it makes a great steak if cooked medium rare, and a very succulent roast.)

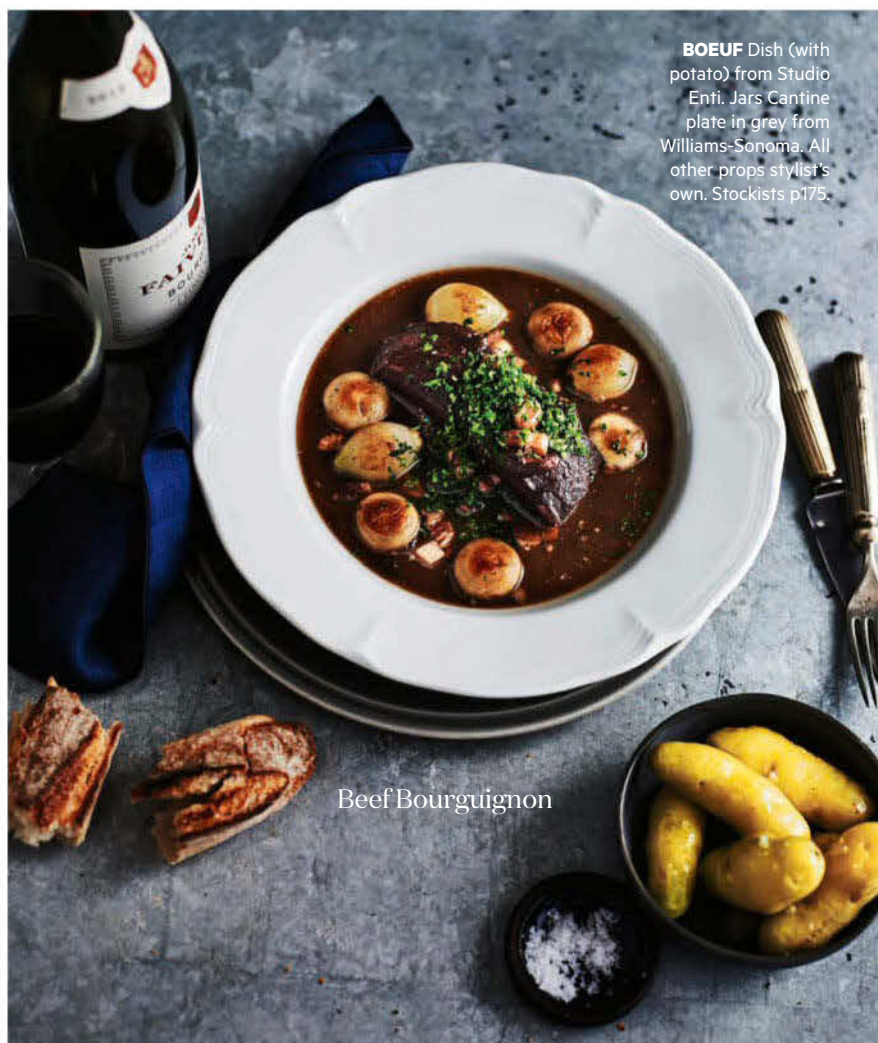
Burgundians often use diced beef for this dish since it's essentially a stew. I used to dice this cut until it occurred to me to braise it in slices, allowing even cooking and attractive presentation. Cook the slices in one layer for even heat distribution and a succulent result.

The principal ingredients are simple: good aged beef, a few root vegetables, pork belly and a good Burgundy. While Australian pinot noir will make a fine Bourguignonne, try to use a French wine. I used a 2012 Joseph Faiveley Bourgogne, which compares favourably in price to a homeland pinot noir.

Note that the sauce may seem thin but, provided the flavour is rich, there's no need to reduce it. And take care to find tiny onions and mushrooms since they add so much to the presentation.

A great advantage of this recipe is that it may be cooked in advance, leaving the final garnish for the day you serve it. As to an accompaniment, I prefer little waxy potatoes such as kipflers or chats, rather than a potato purée, which might negate all the care taken to make a pure-tasting sauce. And, as with many French dishes, don't forget the parsley.

Boeuf à la Bourguignonne is the sort of dish we dream about as real French food. Savour it with a delicious Burgundy. Enjoy.



BOEUF Dish (with potato) from Studio Enti. Jars Cantine plate in grey from Williams-Sonoma. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Beef Bourguignon



STEPS Anchor glass container from The Bay Tree. Small grey bowl and grey plate from Studio Enti. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

paper towels. Place a piece of muslin in the bottom of a heatproof casserole that will neatly hold the meat in a single layer, add vegetables and bouquet garni, wrap into a bundle and secure with kitchen string.

6 Strain any juices left from browning the beef and add to pan along with veal glaze, bring slowly to the boil over low heat and skim until clear – add water if necessary to keep the braising liquor only just covering the contents. Taste to check the seasoning; it will taste acidic and bland but don't oversalt. Press a sheet of baking paper cut to fit the casserole directly on the surface and transfer to the oven. After 20 minutes reduce oven to 130C and continue cooking until meat holds just a tiny bit of resistance when pierced with a skewer (55-60 minutes). Place meat in a bowl and press a sheet of baking paper on the surface to prevent beef drying out. Transfer the bag of vegetables to a sieve placed over the braising pan and press the bag to release the juices, then place over low heat on the stovetop and simmer gently while skimming off as much fat as possible until broth looks fairly clear (4-5 minutes). Filter the braising liquor through a sieve lined with moistened muslin into a bowl placed over a larger one holding ice cubes and a small handful of salt so that it cools quickly. Stir from time to time and once cool, pour this over the beef. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours. Once liquid is really cold, spoon off any remaining fat.

7 About an hour before serving, very slowly reheat your Bourguignonne on the stovetop. Heat remaining oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, add lardons and fry, stirring occasionally, until golden brown (2-3 minutes). Place lardons on paper towels, discard butter and wipe out pan.

8 Heat half the clarified butter over medium-high heat and sauté champignons until they look glazed (5-6 minutes). Place the champignons on paper towels, discard butter and wipe out pan.

9 Heat remaining clarified butter and sauté pickling onions, keeping the pan on the move so onions roll in the hot butter to gain some colour (10-15 minutes). Drain on paper towels. Add lardons, mushrooms and onions to Bourguignonne and simmer until onions are cooked through (10-15 minutes; the sauce won't be thickened but will taste delicious). Serve in deep dishes with an equal share of the vegetables and lardons and scatter generously with parsley. Accompany with small boiled kipfler or chat potatoes.

Note Instead of oyster blade, you can use boned, trimmed short rib or chuck steak. The former may be portioned like the oyster blade and will take 2-2½ hours to cook. The chuck should be diced in 2.5cm-3cm pieces and will take a similar time. Veal glaze is a highly reduced veal stock. Boil 750ml good low-salt veal stock over medium-high heat until reduced to 150ml. **61**

Boeuf à la Bourguignonne

Begin this recipe two days ahead to marinate the meat.

Prep time 30 mins, cook 1 hr 20 mins
(plus marinating, chilling)

Serves 6

- 24 tiny champignons (such as Swiss browns)
- 6 pieces beef oyster blade (240gm each trimmed weight), preferably grass fed (see note)
- 170 ml olive oil
- 50 ml Cognac or brandy
- 2 onions, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
- A fresh bouquet garni of 4 thyme sprigs, 6 parsley stalks and 1 fresh bay leaf
- 150 ml veal glaze (see note)
- 300 gm boneless pickled pork belly, cut into 8mm lardons
- 100 ml clarified butter
- 12-18 smallest pickling onions, peeled and pierced through their centres with a paring knife
- ¾ cup finely chopped curly-leaf parsley
- Red Burgundy marinade**
- 750 ml red Burgundy or other pinot noir
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 6 parsley stalks
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 2 garlic cloves, unpeeled, smashed

STEP BY STEP

1 Remove stalks from mushrooms and place in a sealable non-reactive container with marinade ingredients and beef (reserve mushrooms), cover and refrigerate overnight to marinate.

2 Remove beef from marinade and pat dry thoroughly with paper towels, then set aside to come to room temperature (chilled meat will not brown easily without shedding its juices).

3 Meanwhile, strain the marinade through a sieve lined with muslin or filter paper and set aside.

4 Heat 60ml oil in a frying pan over medium heat and brown meat well all over, watching the heat so caramelisation occurs slowly (5-6 minutes). Remove the meat and wipe out pan with paper towels, then return meat to pan. Away from the heat source, add Cognac, return to very low heat, shake pan and allow to boil for 20-30 seconds (take care – the spirit may catch alight over a gas flame, which is desirable but can set off smoke alarms). Turn the beef over and set aside.

5 Preheat oven to 160C. Wipe out pan again, add 60ml oil and heat over medium-high heat. Add chopped onions and carrots and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly coloured (7-8 minutes). Drain off the fat and pat the vegetables dry with

A woman with dark hair in a braid, wearing a bright yellow cardigan and a patterned apron, is smiling broadly while kneading a piece of dough on a wooden surface. The background is a white brick wall with a kitchen counter and various bottles visible.

There's more
to Rachel than
cooking
is just for
starters



**Rachel Khoo's Kitchen
Notebook Melbourne**
Thursdays 8pm



Lettuce praise

This garden stalwart takes root at the mere spill of a seed packet no matter what the season, and never more so than now, writes **Mat Pember**.

There isn't too much to get excited about in the garden in winter, but there is lettuce, the Border collie of the vegetable world – loyal and easy to please. Throw any season at a lettuce and you're bound to get some produce in return. In fact, lettuce seems to thrive best in winter and is crunchier than ever come August.

If you go to the supermarket to buy a head of lettuce, you'll have three, maybe four choices. Go to a good nursery and there are enough varieties to start a leafy cult. Lettuces are categorised as either hearting (iceberg, for example) or non-hearting (mignonette, say), which indicates how they should be harvested: hearting lettuces should be plucked as whole heads, while non-hearting lettuces are harvested in our preferred leaf-by-leaf manner. Having said that, with a home vegetable patch you're more likely to pick all lettuces leaf by leaf to encourage a perpetual harvest.

The hardest part about growing lettuce at this time of year, aside from choosing the variety, is dragging yourself outside in the cold to plant it. But once it's in the patch, the weather gods take care of the rest. Being a leaf vegetable, lettuce needs nitrogen to satisfy its needs, so mix compost or slow-release chook manure into the patch before planting, then splash the seedlings with liquid seaweed concentrate every couple of weeks.

Choose the sunniest spot available, but lettuce also tolerates partial shade. If you can't find a spot in direct sunlight, choose one that gets reflective light, and avoid planting lettuces too close to established crops. Despite the undemanding shallow root zones of lettuce, larger, hungrier crops will bully it about.

All lettuces germinate and grow with such ease that you needn't do more than spill a packet of

seeds and you'll end up with a crop. If you want to be a bit more precise, create shallow trenches with your fingertip no more than a centimetre deep and 15 centimetres apart, and place a couple of seeds every 10 to 15 centimetres; they're usually minute, so leave the gloves off. However, given how well lettuce seedlings cope with transplanting (and our need for instant gratification), we prefer planting seedlings rather than seeds.

Separate the plants in the punnet and space out to the required distance. Once in the ground, water them well and continue to do so every couple of days, or as the weather demands. Since we're still locked in winter, the patch will hold on to moisture, so the greatest risk is overwatering seedlings and having them rot. Unlike an automated irrigation system that comes on regardless of the conditions, use your human senses to see what's going on. Overwatering is often an invitation for snails and slugs to venture around the patch, and sweet lettuces are a favoured snack.

Within a month – perhaps less if there are early signs of spring – the lettuces will be ready for the first harvest. Start with the outer, more mature leaves to free up energy for the next generation to come through. If you find that your plants are becoming congested, harvest some as entire heads to make space for the others to thrive. If you want dense hearts, you'll need to be patient – it's usually a two to three-month commitment.

As spring breaks through, your lettuces will intensify in texture and flavour. The longer they're left in the ground, the tougher and more bitter the leaves become, so keep your plants in the ground for as long as your palate can cope. By spring, there will be plenty of other goodies in the patch to tempt you, but remember: there will always be lettuce.

WHAT TO PLANT

TEMPERATE

BEEETROOT 🌱
BOK CHOY/PAK CHOI 🌱
CARROT 🌱
CELERY 🌱
CORIANDER 🌱
FENNEL 🌱
HERBS
(ALL EXCEPT BASIL) 🌱
KALE 🌱
LETTUCE 🌱
PARSNIP 🌱
PEAS 🌱
RADISH 🌱
ROCKET 🌱
SILVERBEET 🌱
SPINACH 🌱
SPRING ONION 🌱
STRAWBERRY 🌱
SWEDE 🌱
TURNIP 🌱

KEY

🌱 Seed 🌱 Seedling
+ For cool, tropical and subtropical climate planting advice and a video on making compost visit gourmettraveller.com.au.



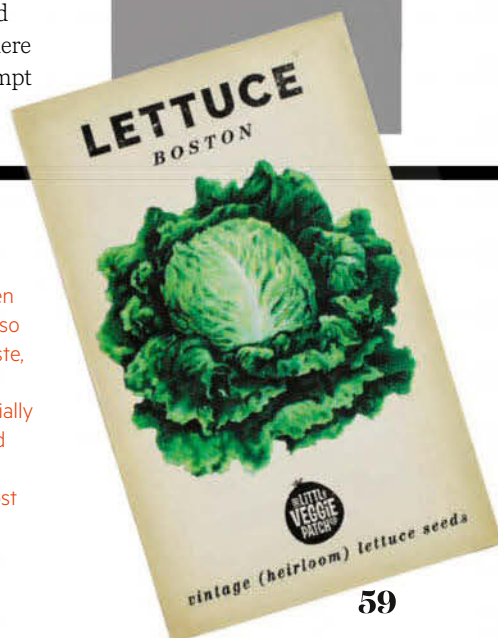
TIP OF THE MONTH: MAKING COMPOST

The art of making compost is not unlike that of making bread. Much like fine-tuning a mix of yeast, flour and water to create the ultimate dough, a master compost-maker will strike a fine balance between green and brown wastes, creating compost utopia. Unfortunately, too few of us are truly great at making compost (or bread), so here are some tips.

EXCESS MOISTURE If your compost is too wet, it will get stinky and won't break down properly; if it's too dry, nothing will happen and it will never become compost. Your compost should feel damp, not wet.

THE RIGHT MIX Much like making the perfect loaf of bread with the right balance of ingredients, the first thing to remember when making

compost is that it isn't just about the A-list kitchen scraps – green waste. The less-fancied scraps also require consideration. Brown waste, which includes straw, shredded paper and dried leaves, is essentially the compost-maker's flour. Mixed with green waste, it helps create the perfect conditions for compost to thrive. ●





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**BAND OF BROTHERS**

From left: Tyson, Chayse and Blayne Bertoncello. Right: slow-cooked pork neck with pork stock, apple and nasturtium.



O My goodness

Yes, it's outside the CBD and, yes, it's dégustation-only, but, writes **Michael Harden**, O My's originality makes it well worth the trip.

It's difficult not to get swept up in their back story. Three brothers – Tyson, Blayne and Chayse Bertoncello – from Beaconsfield, all in their twenties, decide to open a restaurant in an old butcher shop in this semi-rural neck of the woods on the edge of Melbourne's suburban sprawl. They call it O My (perhaps it was obligatory to have a Y in the name).

The two older Bertoncello brothers – Tyson and Blayne – have worked as chefs, head chefs at times, in local restaurants. Blayne, who has taken on the head chef role at O My, has done a five-week stage at Attica.

They designed, renovated and decorated the restaurant themselves. They cultivated vegetable gardens and planted an orchard with 40 fruit trees. They decided to go with a dégustation menu – four, six and eight courses. They're mad for growing their own produce, for foraging, and they're enthused about wine – particularly the local stuff and smaller producers. They make bread using a laborious process where the sourdough is aged for a week and baked just before service. They dry grapes, pickle green tomatoes, dehydrate berries.

In short, this isn't your regular suburban restaurant. This is a much more far-reaching proposition. And while they are keen, the brothers are also young and relatively inexperienced.

So, while it's a lovely romantic story to embrace, it's also tempting to settle back, arms folded, and wait for the car crash. Can they actually pull this thing off?

But then this lands: a trio of starters, arranged on a flat piece of dark grey stone. First, salmon pastrami, cured with sea salt, black pepper and dried coriander for two days so it takes on an intense meaty texture and flavour – vibrant and wholly satisfying. It's sliced to order and strewn with lemon thyme leaves and flower buds that add a sweet citric element and leave you wanting more.

Then an assiette of leek follows that includes leek hearts glistening with crustacean oil and sprinkled with prawn salt, crunchy squares of dehydrated outer leek leaves and a scattering of charred and blitzed leek ash over the top – clever and balanced.

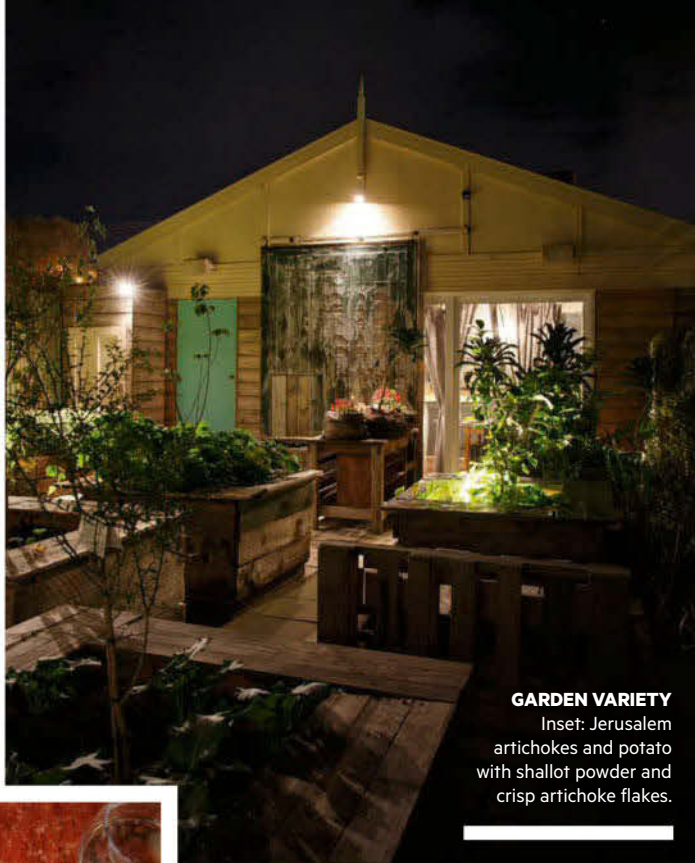
And finally, a small piece of venison, brined in a mix of salt, juniper, cloves and cinnamon, that's quickly seared to order and then coated lightly in an intense but not overpowering dried raspberry powder.

Aside from the satisfying sound of preconceptions toppling, what's best about this initial volley is that while the food here is undeniably ambitious and creative, there's also an assuring steady-handedness, an understanding of balance and of why each element is present. There are neither too many nor too few ingredients. And those that are there are not overly fiddled with. These three one-bite morsels may not be as artfully plated and finessed as some on other dégustation menus around town, but they signal that there's something really interesting happening here. It's fresh and original.>



**DOWNLOAD
OR CONTACT**

Scan this page with the free **viewa** app to see a full menu from O My or to contact the restaurant.



GARDEN VARIETY
Inset: Jerusalem
artichokes and potato
with shallot powder and
crisp artichoke flakes.



It's these unexpected *twists and turns*, the deft, surprising touches, that make eating at O My so enjoyable.

It happens again later in the meal with another well-wrought trio, this time sweet snacks that precede dessert. This lot are separately plated, though the grey stone platter does make another appearance.

The first part, on a shiny black plate, is a play on bread served with oil and vinegar. The olive oil is a smooth, pale green, slightly sweet blob of emulsion nursing a dark smaller blob of gel made from salted balsamic vinegar. Then there's a little pile of crunchy, slightly sweet breadcrumbs. They're made from the offcuts from the fig and walnut bread that's wrapped in paper and string and given to you as you leave to have for breakfast the next morning. As slightly sweet and fruity crumbs, the bread combines with the oil and vinegar combination in a way that's comforting and exciting, rich but sensibly proportioned at just one or two mouthfuls.

The second part, resting on a rosemary twig, is an orange segment that's been coated in sugar and powdered rosemary before being flamed. It comes away from the heat slightly charred and thinly coated with a sublime rosemary-flavoured "toffee". It's finished with tiny rosemary flowers that add further depth to the herbal-citrus love-in.

Sweet snack number three is the straightest of the trio, but no less enjoyable for it. It's a small, pyramid-shaped sea salt and vanilla caramel, textbook in execution and lifted by the addition of sweetleaf flowers that are less intensely sweet than the leaves and have a really attractive citrus element.

It's these unexpected twists and turns, the deft, surprising touches, that make eating at O My so enjoyable. It's particularly refreshing because the

flourishes and quirks come across as more chef enthusiasm than ego. The plates seem to be saying "look at this" rather than "look at me".

The same attitude informs the front of house, where Chayse, the youngest of the brothers, works the floor with equal doses of eagerness and wit. His time at the restaurant – which opened two years ago – has coincided with his conversion to full-blown wine lover. But while he's keen to tell you all about, say, the 2014 Rieslingfreak No 4 from South Australia or a 2013 Between Five Bells shiraz blend from Geelong or a 2013 Payten & Jones pinot noir from Kilmore, he has the intuition to know when to move away from the table. Add the odd amusing anecdote, like the fact that his ability to expand his palate and knowledge through tasting wines at cellar doors is severely limited because he's still on his P-plates and can't drink, and it's difficult not to be charmed.

The dining room has its charms too, mixing oft-seen Melbourne restaurant design tropes – dangling Edison globes, banquettes, timber floors, a terrarium – with original quirky touches like the stencils on the dark painted walls (done by Tyson) and little test-tube-like vases on the tables containing clippings of edible leaves and flowers from the restaurant's various kitchen gardens. It's far from slick and even a little clunky in places, but it's a cute room and flatteringly lit.

But if O My was relying on fresh-faced charm to get it over the line, the shtick would wear thin pretty quickly, especially for those who have spent a whack of time in their car to get here (you can also get the train; it takes just over an hour from Flinders Street Station



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plus a 10-minute stroll). That's not the case here. The food coming out of the kitchen makes the charm a bonus. Not because it's always completely successful but because it never fails to be interesting.

The menu changes regularly so you may not always get to try the excellent Jerusalem artichoke (that they grow themselves) and potato dish. It comes looking almost dumpling-like, the outer "skin" made from thinly sliced pickled artichoke. It's dusted with shallot powder and sprinkled with small crisp artichoke flakes. Under that layer there are Jerusalem artichokes that have been pot-roasted in butter and lemon, potatoes that have been puréed and fermented in yoghurt for a couple of days, a slow-cooked egg and a surprising, bracing dash of Vietnamese mint oil. It's inspired.

Then there's the excellent piece of kingfish, pan-cooked on one side in lemon and butter and served with a mushroom and lemongrass broth, shaved and basted mushrooms (pines, foraged from nearby), a little sphere of gel made from Meyer lemon, a sprinkling of finger lime and some particularly good, fleshy warrigal greens on the top. Again, there's great balance here, a little richness, some acid to cut through that, a little earthiness from the leaves.

A slow-cooked lamb dish with grains, garlic and pineapple sage leaves in the mix is less successful in terms of tying elements together, but the combination of brined and slow-cooked pork neck, served with gorgeous concentrated pork stock, bits and pieces of apple (tapenade, powdered skin, flesh compressed with apple cider), nicely mustardy nasturtium leaves and flowers and some sheep sorrel is a comforting gem of a dish.

Technique gets a good workout with the chocolate-bar dessert. It's certainly a looker, its shiny dark surface topped with chunks of honeycomb and purple



TRIPLE TREAT

A trio of pre-dessert sweets: an olive oil emulsion with sweet breadcrumbs, sea salt and vanilla caramels and flamed orange segments with rosemary powder.

borage flowers. It sits next to a quenelle of cultured cream, also sporting flowers and sitting on a smooth, tan sweet potato and vanilla sauce. Break into the bar and you find a quite brilliant sweet potato fudge, a layer of chocolate cake and some caramel butter. Again, you read the ingredient list and might feel like scoffing at the overload. When you taste it, everything is in the right place, doing its fair share of the lifting.

Originality often gets neglected in the business of running a restaurant, safe options being understandable when people are trying to make a living by attracting a crowd. Being removed from the hothouse (and the expense) of the crammed urban dining scene has perhaps given the Bertoncello brothers more breathing space to test their ideas. It certainly affords them the physical space to grow and forage their own produce. But whether it's because of geographical, philosophical or financial reasons, there's something refreshing and original happening at O My. And that has attracted its own crowd. It's a good one to join. ●



O My

23 Woods St, Beaconsfield,
(03) 9769 9000,

omyrestaurant.com.au
Licensed

Cards AE MC V EFT

Open Lunch Sat-Sun

noon-5pm; dinner

Wed-Sun 6pm-late

(last bookings 8.30pm)

Prices Four- (\$55),

six- (\$75) or eight-course

dégustation (\$100)

Vegetarian On request

Noise Comfortable

Wheelchair access Yes

Minus For city slickers,

the trek to Beaconsfield

Plus Infectious

enthusiasm, and

surprising, original food

AND ALSO

Jack of all trades

Matt Wilkinson and Ben Foster (Pope Joan, Hams & Bacon) are

behind this corner store-cafeteria-bar-bottle shop. Jack Horner has good coffee, a sharp breakfast list (from muesli to eggs to jaffles), hot dishes, sandwiches, cheese, salads and sweet stuff to eat in or take away, plus a small range of groceries and craft beer and wine. Sharp-looking and quality-focused, it's one to watch. Jack Horner, 179 Weston St, East Brunswick, (03) 9388 1825



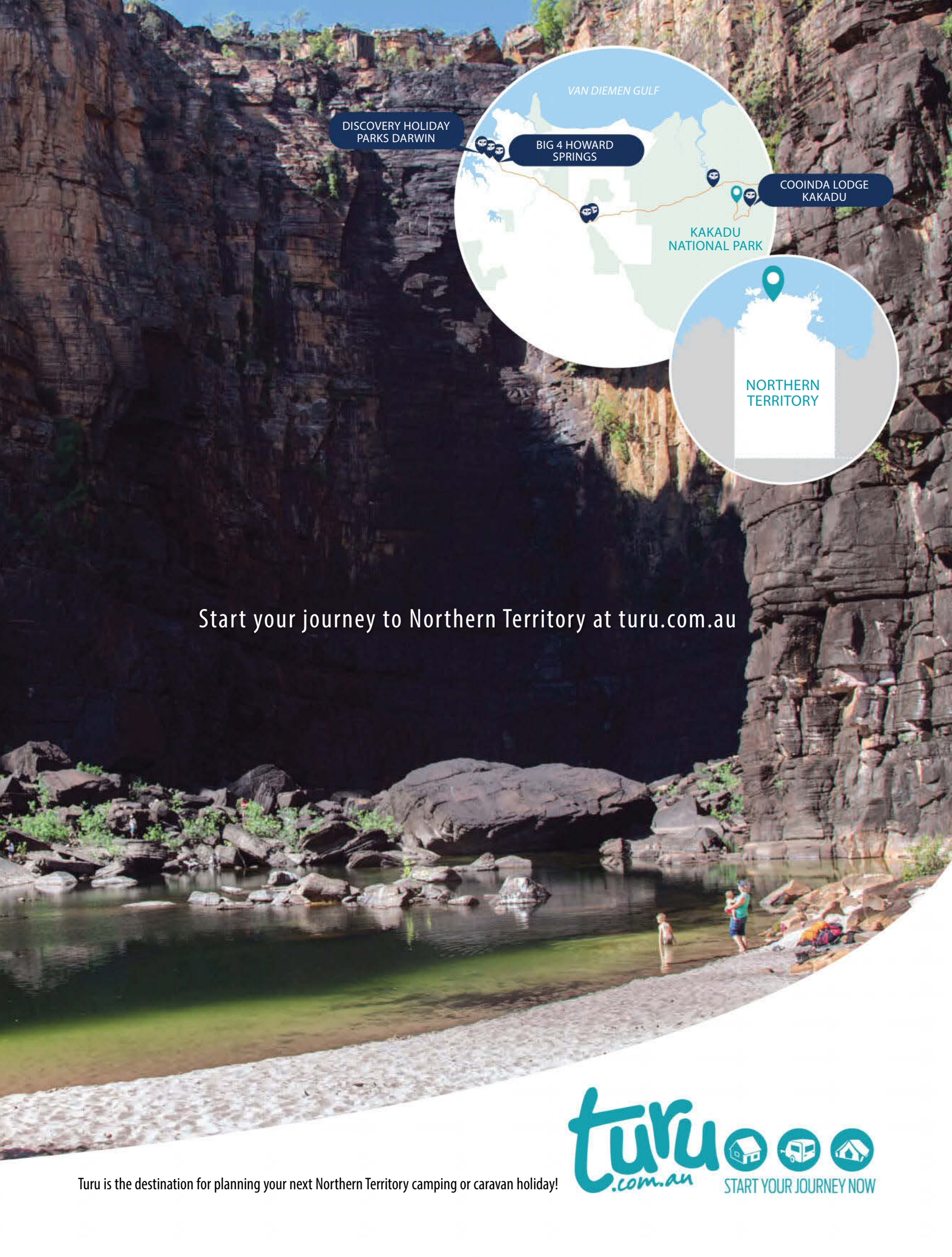
JACK HORNER

Chicken run

Fans of big flavoured, juicy rôtisserie chicken should make a beeline for Belleville. A bohemian bar and diner up a flight of stairs down a lane off Chinatown, the cavernous space has two bars with excellent cocktails and wine. You can order a quarter, half or whole bird, plus sauces of varying degrees of heat and sides – from fries to poutine and kimchi coleslaw. There are dumplings and meatballs too. An excellent, spacious, all-day city pitstop. Belleville, Globe Alley, Melbourne, (03) 9663 4041

Dumpling ground

Dumpling restaurant Din Tai Fung has opened its first Melbourne outlet. It's big and flashy, with 253 seats, three private rooms and a trademark glassed-in open kitchen in the centre of the room. Size has not diminished the quality of the food, especially the signature soup dumplings (the xiao long bao are note-perfect). Book a private room to avoid the queue out the front, a fixture since day one. Din Tai Fung, level 4, Emporium Melbourne, 287 Lonsdale St, Melbourne, (03) 9654 1876



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New kid on the block

The team from A Tavola serve up a generous helping of homely Italian cooking at Besser that speaks of retro good times, writes **Pat Nourse**.

Puglia is the new Tuscany. Or at least it was. The Collio is the new Chianti. Or at least it might be. Trastevere is the old Pigneto. Or at least that's what I read in the glossy travel magazines. But the hot new region that's inspiring restaurateurs around the world can't be found on Google Maps. It's the past.

Sydney in 2015 is a hotbed of contemporary Italian cooking – a place where chefs who have moved through restaurants casual and formal, eating food from the Middle, South and Far East along the way, start making connections that result in fresh takes on Italian cooking seldom seen (let alone executed convincingly) in Rome and Milan. But even as Mitch Orr teams fish balls with spaghetti at Acme, Federico Zanellato does coda alla vaccinara in sang choi bao at LuMi and Alessandro Pavoni stuffs spit-roasted lamb into agnolotti and then dresses them with goat's milk yoghurt at Ormeggio, the scene here is fertile enough to produce a smart eatery looking in almost the opposite direction.

While the chaps from Torrisi Italian Specialties tapped into a current of *Godfather* and *Goodfellas* cool

when they channelled classic New York red-sauce joints to open Carbone in Manhattan back in 2013, Eugenio Maiale and his partners from A Tavola have been far more ambitious in their choice of inspiration: 1970s suburban Italo-Australia.

That explains the green concrete floor, at least. And the spiky plants in concrete pots, and quite possibly the chicken wire over the shelves above the open kitchen. And it explains the name: a frieze of besser blocks, the least-missed vestige of 1970s landscaping, adorns the wall above the (concrete) banquette.

This used to be Billy Kwong but the brave renovation, which knocked down the wall into the shopfront next door to double the floor space, has rendered it unrecognisable. On paper it may sound chilly and – let's say it – more than a little misguided, but although it feels a little spare and raw, it works. If you'd had a grappa too many you might be tempted to say that it has an open sunniness that (stay with me) recalls the upcycled Motel 6 vibe at the Ace Hotel in Palm Springs as much as it does Sundays at Nonna's house. Almost.>

HOMAGE TO NONNA

Above left: Besser's owner, Eugenio Maiale. Above, clockwise from top: roasted peppers and salt cod; fried sardines with garlic mayonnaise; polenta and radicchio with Gorgonzola dolce.

**SUBURBAN CHIC**

Besser's dining room with a backdrop of its signature building blocks; its gnocchi with turkey ragù.

The thing that animates it, that brings to life the idea of it being about family get-togethers in *a more innocent time*, is generosity.

The thing that animates it, the thing that ties it all together and brings to life the idea of it being about family get-togethers in a more innocent time, is generosity. The food comes out on blue-and-white enamelware, but it's more homely and uncomplicated than slavishly retro. It's hard not to like a menu that lists "today's fresh bread" and then immediately follows it with "yesterday's bread, garlic butter", and it's harder still not to like that bread when it's drenched so comprehensively with that butter.

Everything about the shape, scope, feel and price of the place suggests it's been designed with groups in mind, and the carte is perfectly flexible in that regard. Several of the small dishes can be ordered a piece at time, whether it's superb sardines, boned, crumbed, fried, dusted with salt and served hot in a sweet little brown paper envelope with garlic mayo, or the lushly juicy pork, veal and beef meatballs.

By the same token, you could lounge in the window as a lone wolf with a glass of rosato and watch Crown Street's near-peerless people-parade over a bowl of gnocchi with turkey ragù and be perfectly happy. The potato dumplings are airy and light, the sauce rugged and hearty. A scattering of crunchy fried breadcrumbs makes for an inspired garnish.

It's appealingly unfussy food for the most part, a smear-free-zone, and yet smart touches abound:

the melting slivers of bittersweet witlof atop a wide, shallow bowl of wet polenta mixed with shreds of radicchio and daubs of Gorgonzola dolcelatte, say; a salty grating of ricotta salata that makes a plate of very thoroughly roasted, almost caramelised carrots, fennel and crisped-up kale pop with flavour. If the tzatziki-like cucumber and yoghurt mixture that accompanies "lamb fingers" of breaded and fried shoulder meat, creamy under its golden crust, seems mildly at odds with the theme, it makes perfect sense on the plate.

A word about the wine on tap: it's slightly annoying. The way that it's listed by variety without reference to who makes it is off-putting, at any rate. Wine on tap seems entirely in keeping with the backyard aesthetic, and offering it by the glass, bottle, litre and half-litre carafe is useful, especially with nothing priced over \$50. But the lack of detail suggests that unless you're simply after a quaffer you'd be better off looking to the larger list rather than mucking around trying to drag details about the wine out of the otherwise helpful, knowledgeable staff.

The list isn't huge, but the edit of mostly Italian wines is fair, if skewed a little pricey in the reds. The cocktail list is smart, and the beers on offer include some good local brews as well as Ichnusa, Menabrea and Peroni. Nothing actually made in anyone's uncle's shed. Or at least nothing listed.

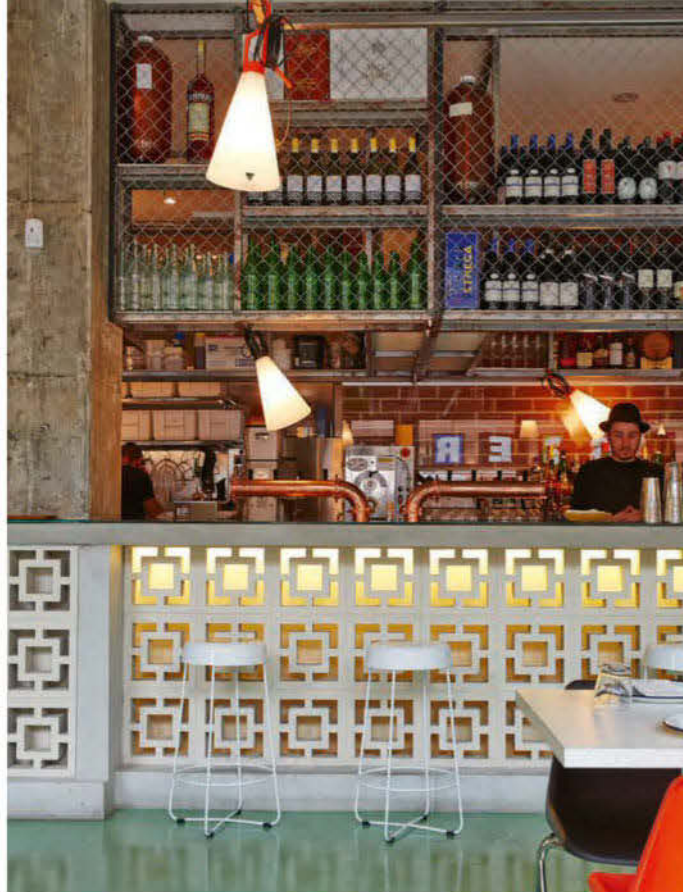
**DOWNLOAD OR CONTACT**

Scan this page with the free **viewa** app to see a full menu from Besser or to contact the restaurant.

As befits a visit to nonna's house, there's a welcome regard here for care in the details in just about everything else. Chicken, slow-roasted and pan-seared, is golden and juicy, strewn with soft cloves of garlic, a branch of rosemary and a red chilli. A side of braised lentils is done as perfectly straight as it would be back in Italy, while the plate of green things is notable for the fact that each bean and pea on it is cooked just so. The balance of flavours in the roasted red peppers with creamed salt cod, a classic combination done here with the winning addition of capers, rings of red onion and crisp croûtons, is just as careful.

"Mum's birthday sponge cake" might just be the most Instagrammed dessert in town right now. And when you're presented with something so artfully, artlessly decorated with silver and gold dragées, you too may find yourself reaching for your phone. Reach for a spoon instead: the layers of booze-soaked sponge, orange ricotta and Yogo-like chocolate custard taste even better than they look. Or opt instead for a truly 1970s throwback with vanilla ice-cream and a salad of red apple, grapes, kiwifruit, musky strawberries, persimmon, pear and mint leaves served in one of those pressed wooden bowls that held bhujia mix at Uncle Terry's and Auntie June's parties back in the day.

Aesthetically speaking, Besser isn't so much the Rat Pack at the Tropicana as Uncle Enzo doing his best Deano in the garage after that grappa too many. It's a bring-your-own-scene sort of arrangement, but when the table is set in such an inviting manner, and when the welcome is so warm, being cool might just have to take a back seat to being happy. There's no shortage of Italian eateries specialising in attitude; if you want a restaurant where generosity is the signature instead, Besser is the place for you. ●



BLOCK PARTY

The namesake besser concrete bricks; Mum's birthday sponge cake.



Besser

Shop 3, 355 Crown St, Surry Hills, (02) 9331 1611, besseritalian.com.au

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Prices Entrées \$10-\$16, main courses \$22-\$29, desserts \$7-\$10

Vegetarian Two entrées, two main courses

Noise Noisy

Wheelchair access Yes

Minus A very specific aesthetic

Plus Food to please all comers, sound value

AND ALSO

Chaco can

Consolidating its supremacy over casual Japanese dining

in the inner east, **Chaco Bar** has complemented its nightly yakitori offer with a concise ramen menu at lunch Wednesday to Saturday. Fittingly for a noodle bar run out of a yakitori shop, the two choices, "fat soy" and "fish salt", are made on a chicken stock base, the latter garnished with John Dory wontons. It's great stuff. **Chaco Bar**, 238 Crown St, Darlinghurst, (02) 9007 8352



THIEVERY

A real steal

The name references Ali Baba and his 40 light-fingered mates, and **Thievery** has already stolen hearts aplenty. A hip and buzzy Lebanese diner from the Eat Art Truck food team, chef Jordan Muhamed and former Nomad chef Julian Cincotta, who consults on the menu, it's home to kibbeh nayeh reimagined as raw kingfish with cracked wheat, a tabbouleh san choi bao, and "LFC", which gives Lebanon its time to shine in the fried chicken stakes. Good fun. **Thievery**, 91 Glebe Point Rd, Glebe, (02) 8283 1329

Cross purposes

Despite the successes of the caffeine revolution, finding good coffee and good café food under one roof is still surprisingly tough in Sydney, not least in the CBD. Enter **The Cross**. With Mecca veteran Marcelo Soto running the show, the coffee can more than be relied upon, and the eats are just as impressive, whether it's a toastie made with Maffra cheddar, zucchini and cauliflower pickles on Brickfields ciabatta or any of the salads on offer. **The Cross Eatery**, 155 Clarence St, Sydney, (02) 9279 4280



NEW HOLDEN CASCADA

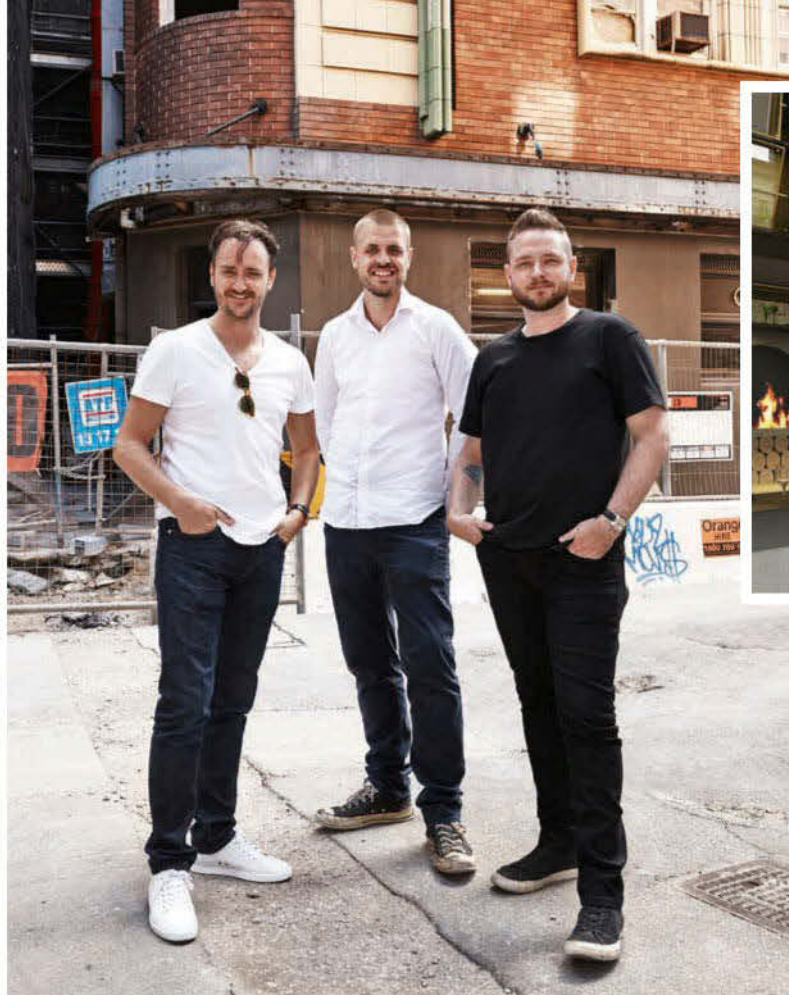
LET LIFE IN

The stunning new Holden Cascada has arrived with sophisticated European styling, German engineering and luxury finishes like perforated Siena leather-appointed seats and diffused LED interior ambient lighting. The sculpted, triple-layered soft-top design and body blade styling creates a sleek silhouette with a roomy interior, making this a genuine 4-seater you can enjoy with your friends. Open up to the finer things in life. holden.com.au/cascada



HOLDEN
LET'S GO THERE





Rule of three

A heritage precinct in Sydney gets a new lease on life with a trifecta of restaurant openings, writes **Pat Nourse**.

Loh Lik Peng is calmly freaking out. “Frankly,” he says, it’s terrifying.” The hotelier has opened properties and hip restaurants with his Unlisted Collection to acclaim in London, Hong Kong, Shanghai and his hometown of Singapore but even so he finds the prospect of breaking into the dining market of Sydney more than a little daunting. It’s all coming to a head this month with the long-awaited arrival of The Old Clare, a mighty ambitious new boutique hotel in the up-and-coming suburb of Chippendale in inner-city Sydney.

The development draws together two heritage structures, The Clare Hotel and the Carlton & United Brewery administration building, which architects Tonkin Zulaikha Greer have linked and transformed into a 62-room hotel. It has a gym and a day spa, a rooftop pool and bar and other appealing mod-cons, but the amenities of most interest to Sydneysiders are, of course, the three new restaurants.

“Sydney has a seriously good food scene and as the new entrant there’s a huge amount of trepidation about how we’ll do,” Loh says. “I don’t mind admitting that this has in many ways been the biggest challenge for me yet and opening a hotel and three restaurants at the same time probably is a little foolish but it’s too late now to think too much about it.”

But Loh has been far from rash in his choice of talent, picking three chefs who cover the spread of potential quite nicely: a local, a rising star and a globetrotting veteran with scores of openings to his name. Let’s get to know them and their restaurants a little better.

SILVEREYE

With 50 seats on the second floor and a tasting-menu format, this will be the fanciest of the eateries.

WHO Yorkshireman Sam Miller, a chef with formidable experience in senior roles at Copenhagen’s Noma and Fäviken in Sweden, in his first stint heading a kitchen.

HOW HE WAS CHOSEN “Sam is someone I respect a lot, and I know a lot of chefs he has worked with think highly of him,” says Loh. “He’s a humble, thoughtful guy; he’ll be doing something unique for Sydney, though I will admit I don’t quite know what yet.”

WHY HE’S DOING IT “It was the opportunity to do something with Peng,” says Miller. “Australia, and Sydney in particular, is an attractive place to live and work, and the produce is very different to what I’ve worked with before. The whole project is really exciting.”

WHAT HE’S DOING “I’d call it contemporary casual fine-dining. Multiple servings, some eaten with your hands, some with cutlery, but everything energetic and tasty. Product-driven, with a bit of a vegetable focus.”

ON THE PLATE “A dish of turnips, raw and cooked, with truffles and sorrel, finished with a brown butter and passionfruit vinaigrette – taking traditional elements (turnips, truffles) and preparing them in a thoughtful way and then incorporating some new flavours.”

TO DRINK “An eclectic mix of organic and natural wine from Australia and the rest of the world, focusing on small Australian producers and lesser-known grape varieties. Further down the track we hope to have beers and spirits made exclusively for the restaurant.”

THE LOOK “Pretty clean – lots of wood and stone, quite light, nothing too crazy. Quite simple, but as much as possible is going to be handmade to give a quietly luxurious edge to it. It’s the same designer at Automata, Matt Machine, but it’ll look completely different.”

IS IT FANCY? “Not in a traditional way. It’s going to be at the top end of the price-range, but I’m certainly not from a fancy background. I’m from a mining village in Yorkshire, and I want to make it somewhere I want to go. I don’t mind spending money if it’s good, but I want it

NEW ORDER

Above, from left: chefs Jason Atherton, Sam Miller and Clayton Wells; an artist’s impression of Kensington Street Social.

to be fun and relaxed even with that attention to detail.”

ON THE NAME A small bird that’s indigenous to Australia, apparently.

AUTOMATA

The modern prix-fixe 60-seater, set on the ground floor. Pronounced “aw-TOM-a-tah”, but accessible nonetheless, according to its auteurs.

WHO Local boy Clayton Wells, until recently the sous-chef at the three-starred Momofuku Seiobo.

HOW HE WAS CHOSEN “Clayton is an exciting young talent,” says Loh. “I’ve known him from his days at Viajante in London and I was very excited to find out he’d landed at Momofuku here. I feel privileged to be the one to back him; he has great ideas for his restaurant and for me he is the most natural fit for the street.”

WHY HE’S DOING IT “This is my hometown, this is my neighbourhood,” says Wells. “I’ve always wanted to open something in Chippendale and eight years later here we are. It’s such an exciting area now, it’s great.”

WHAT HE’S DOING “A five-course set menu that will change frequently. It’ll be uncomplicated but inventive food in a relaxed atmosphere. If you want to eat those five courses very fast, you can knock it off in an hour and a half, easy, but if you want to take three hours, you’re welcome to do that, too.”

ON THE PLATE “It’ll be fairly simple in terms of how it falls on the plate. Quail with witlof and a bit of burnt apple and caper purée and caper oil, say, or storm clams on the shell with chilled rosemary-infused dashi and an aerated cream.”

TO DRINK “There’ll be a small bar. We’ll serve snacks there, and the wine list will have an element of the artisanal wines that I like, but I also want there to be something for everyone. If someone wants to come in and drink a pinot from Victoria, it’ll be there.”

THE LOOK “Our designer Matt Machine works a lot with steel and custom motorcycles; the machinery aspect is part of the look and feel. It won’t look like a workshop, it won’t be frightening – that’s just the aesthetic inspiration. It sounds very masculine, but we’re working hard to soften that. We’ve got a chandelier made from a World War II-era radial engine that Peng found in London, and we’ll use other interesting pieces like that.”

WITH A NAME LIKE AUTOMATA, IT SOUNDS LIKE DINING IN FRITZ LANG’S METROPOLIS. WILL IT BE FRIGHTENING? “I hope not. No.”

KENSINGTON STREET SOCIAL

The smart-casual international brand, with 120 seats on the ground floor. Following London’s Pollen Street Social, Hong Kong’s Aberdeen Street Social, and a few more insert-name-here Socials around the globe.

WHO Jason Atherton, formerly head of the original Maze in London, now perhaps the most internationally successful of Gordon Ramsay’s protégés.

HOW HE WAS CHOSEN “I’ve worked with Jason for so many years and across so many places that it was

natural for me to ask him,” says Loh. “He’s obviously an old hand, but Sydney is a new market to him, so I think he’s going to be doing simple but tasty food with great cocktails and wines and nothing super-fancy.”

WHY “When Peng said, ‘We’re building this amazing hotel in Sydney, do you want to partner up?’ I saw it as a great chance to cook in Sydney among all the big boys here and cook with some amazing produce,” says Atherton. “I’ve been cooking in London for 27 years, a lot of my chefs have been Australians, and they’re looking forward to coming back. This feels like a natural progression. I’m just super-excited.”

WHAT “You can come to the Social and you don’t have to eat. You can just have a beer, hang out, try a cocktail. If you want to come and have two small plates you can do that – hence the Social. If you want us to devise you a small menu, or if you just want to have dessert, it’s entirely up to you. It should be the kind of place where you can eat once a week without breaking the bank.”

ON THE PLATE “We’ll bring things like the squid and cauliflower back-to-front risotto out. We’re not bringing Pollen Street Social to Sydney – Kensington Street will have its own personality – but there’ll be a couple of things people who know the London restaurant will recognise. Mostly I want to work with Australian black truffles, strawberries from up north in the winter, the seafood. I just want to serve good food at a good price.”

TO DRINK “It’ll be a 100 per cent Australian list, apart from the house wine.”

THE LOOK “It’s designed by Neri&Hu, who designed Pollen Street and our restaurants in Hong Kong, so it’s modern without being trendy. It’ll seem simple, but up close you’ll see work has gone into the detail. It’s got a beautiful kitchen, too, all open, so plenty of interaction with the chefs. But the restaurant isn’t about me or the chef or the sommelier or the mixologist or whatever they call themselves, it’s about the customer.”

ON THE NAME “It’s like baked beans – it does what it says on the tin, and it’s easy when you’re getting in a taxi. It works.” ●

ON THE MENU
Below: Silvereye’s
fried fish. Automata’s
Moreton Bay bugs
with persimmon,
shiso and Sichuan
pepper oil (inset).





WILD BUNCH

From left: Alex Schulkin,
James Erskine, Anton
van Kloppe and
Gareth Belton.

Basket case

A small community is making a big impression with some of the hottest wine labels in the country, writes **Max Allen**.

Open the wine list in almost any trendy restaurant and look at the wines by the glass. Chances are that at least two – and a few more bottles on the list – will come from a tiny enclave of the Adelaide Hills called Basket Range.

Lucy Margaux, Jauma, Ochota Barrels, BK Wines, The Other Right, Gentle Folk – these are some of the hottest labels in Australian wine right now, at the forefront of the natural, low-intervention, minimal-additions trend. And the winemakers behind these labels all work – and in most cases live – around the corner from each other: a small community making a huge impression on the Australian wine scene.

There have been moments like this before: when the right people converge at the right place at the right time and take Australian wine culture in a new direction. It happened in the 1960s, when visionaries such as Max Lake established new boutique wineries in the Hunter Valley; it happened in the '70s when a group of vine-mad doctors dreamed up a wine culture in Margaret River; in the '80s when Peter Lehmann and others revived the Barossa's fortunes.

This time, what's drawn these people together in the wild hills of the Basket Range is a roughly shared philosophy of how wine should be made – with wild yeasts, as little added or taken away as possible, lots of skin contact, no filtration, and just the barest addition

of sulphur at bottling. All the winemakers share this sensibility to varying degrees, even though the wines seem different – the perfumed precision of the Ochota Barrels Weird Berries in the Woods gewürztraminer is a world away from the autumnal funk of Lucy Margaux's Domaine Lucci Wildman Pinot Noir.

One of the group's biggest supporters is Campbell Burton, sommelier at Melbourne's Builders Arms and the organiser of Handmade and SoulFor Wine festivals. He speaks for many in the trade when he raves about the group.

"I'm so excited about what's going on in that little pocket of the hills," he says. "There's a progressiveness up there: everyone is having a crack, searching for how to make more delicious wine more simply, and sharing what they've learned with each other."

Importantly, Burton says, this isn't just a bunch of hippies flying by the seat of their tie-dyed pants. There's a lot of intellectual firepower and life experience behind these winemakers' decisions to throw away the rule book: Anton van Kloppe of Lucy Margaux was a standout student at the University of Adelaide's winemaking course and worked in a large winery before planting his own vineyard; Jauma's James Erskine studied soil science and was named *Gourmet Traveller* Sommelier of the Year before establishing his wine business; Gentle Folk's Gareth Belton is doing PhD research into seaweed when he's not making wine and cider; The Other Right's Alex Schulkin is a scientist at the Australian Wine Research Institute.

Basket Range is a secluded, tree-filled bit of the Adelaide Hills, and although a few vineyards have been planted here since the '80s, the crumpled topography prevents too much development. Some of the local winemakers have their own plots of vines: Anton and Sally van Kloppe's house and winery sheds overlook a biodynamic pinot vineyard; Taras and Amber Ochota have a patch of gamay vines on their block. But most of the winemakers buy their grapes from vineyards across the wider region and further afield. Brendan Keys from BK Wines, for example, cherry-picks chardonnay, pinot, syrah and other varieties for his tangy, textural whites and reds from vineyards in various pockets of the Adelaide Hills such as Lobethal, Lenswood, Piccadilly. James Erskine sources grapes for his outstanding Jauma grenaches from top sites in McLaren Vale such as the Wood vineyard, while Alex Schulkin's wild The Other Right Fire Head grenache comes from a vineyard at Vine Vale in the Barossa.

Anton van Kloppe is arguably the most influential character in the Basket Range group, his own approach helping to inspire others – Erskine, Belton and Schulkin in particular – to establish their own wine businesses.

"When I started 10 years ago, I did the opposite of everything I was taught at winemaking school," says van Kloppe. "I was fighting for a cause: making wine in a wild way that was sound, that had structural integrity. I helped others get started because I wanted people doing interesting stuff. And now the cause is here." ●

“This isn't just a bunch of hippies flying by the seat of their tie-dyed pants.”

TOP DROPS OF THE MONTH



1

SOMETHING DIFFERENT
2012 Mitchell Harris Mataro, Pyrenees, Vic, \$28
I haven't tasted mataro from Victoria's Pyrenees before, but after trying this one, I'd love to taste more: as well as the inky blackcurrants and dried herbs I'd expect from this region, there's also plenty of unusually dark, sinewy, tannin.
mitchellharris.com.au



2

SLINKY SÉMILLON
2014 Olive Hill Sémillon, Barossa Valley, SA, \$28
I like the reds from Burge Family Winemakers in the Barossa, but the wine that I keep coming back to for another glass (and another) is this wonderful unoaked sémillon, with its bright, crisp, moreish lemony fruit and dry, powdery finish.
burgefamily.com.au

BARGAIN BAROSSA
2012 Yalumba Galway Malbec, Barossa Valley, SA, \$18

Galway is one of Australia's oldest labels. I have fond memories of tasting a Galway "Claret" from the 1940s. To celebrate this history, Yalumba has released this brilliant (and underpriced) malbec: dark purple fruit, long grippy tannins.
yalumba.com

3



WHITE BLEND
2014 Ravensworth Seven Months, Canberra District, NSW, \$35
An extended skin-contact blend of pinot gris, gewürz and riesling with tantalising, subtle spice, fabulous finesse and focus. I also like the 2014 Grainery (\$35), a savoury blend of marsanne, roussanne, viognier and chardonnay.
ravensworthwines.com.au



5

FRENCH CIDER
Domaine Johanna Cécillon Cidre Neries, Brittany, France, \$35
If you like traditional French cider, with its deep-golden colour and rich, complex, rustic flavours, you'll love the ciders of Johanna Cécillon. This is my pick of the range: it's packed with the perfumed, chewy tang of ripe gnarly windfall apples.
douglaslambwines.com.au



6

REGAL RHÔNE
2012 Mont-Redon Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France, \$85
From a good vintage and from one of the best producers in the southern Rhône, this is a stunning, powerful, polished red wine: deep flavours of macerated red and black fruit, wrapped up in a majestic sweep of garrigue-scented tannin.
vintageandvine.com

4



NEW WHITE

2015 Coriole Picpoul, McLaren Vale, SA, \$25
The first locally made version of the seafood-friendly southern French white grape picpoul I've tasted and I really like it: as well as the grape's trademark lemony acidity there's a touch of mouth-filling perfumed richness, too.
coriole.com



7

YOUNG RED
2015 Gemtree Luna Temprana Tempranillo, McLaren Vale, SA, \$18
This early-bottled tempranillo has oodles of gorgeous seductive slurpy black fruit and a gentle hug of grippy tannin. The 2014 Luna Roja Tempranillo (\$25), which spends a little longer in oak, is also terrific: spicier, prettier, more refined.
gemtreewines.com

CLASSY PINOT
2013 Stefano Lubiana Pinot Noir, Tas, \$55
The 21st vintage for Steve and Monique Lubiana at their vineyard on the Derwent and the first harvest under biodynamic certification produced this outstanding pinot: really elegant and poised, with an undertow of undergrowth.
slw.com.au



9

10

WINTER BEER
Wicked Elf Porter, Port Macquarie, NSW, 330ml, \$6

As we plough through the colder months I always stock up on a few dark beers; this is one I reach for every time I see it on the shelf at the bottle-o: lovely dark black colour, deep brown head, rich flavours of chocolate, hazelnuts and malt.
thelittlebrewingcompany.com.au



Q&A

BETHANY CLARKE



WINE INSIDER: BETHANY CLARKE, THE FISH HOUSE, BURLEIGH HEADS

Favourite pours? Loving the chenin blancs. We have a '13 Marc Brédif Vouvray on the list, an '03, a '97 and a '69. The younger style seems to be fitting for many people. For a more special wine, a bit of age is always nice. **Best match?** The chenin blanc is beautiful with dishes like our crustacean risotto and our pan-seared scallops. **Producers to watch?** Burgundy and Loire Valley producers like Domaine Huet. Here, Bass Phillip, Lucy Margaux, Sorrenberg, Castagna and Alex Head. **Top off-duty drop?** I don't have a favourite. It's like music: one day you feel like Champagne, one day you feel like a beautiful white Burgundy. *The Fish House, 50 Goodwin Tee, Burleigh Heads, Qld, (07) 5535 7725, thefishhouse.com.au* MAYA KERTHYASA



Defining moment

A dinner to launch the alliance of two globally renowned names, Ferran Adrià and Dom Pérignon, tested the boundaries of creativity, writes **Maya Kerthyasa**.

PARTNERS IN WINE

Clockwise, from above: Chef Ferran Adrià (left) and Dom Pérignon chef de cave Richard Geoffroy; Barcelona's Palo Alto Market, the venue for This is Not a Dinner; tomato biscuit (background) and tomato and olive oil airbag from the Intensity menu; a tasting of Dom's 2005 vintage was the evening's curtain-raiser.

It almost goes without saying but there's a lot of history behind Dom Pérignon. Famed among other things for releasing wines only in vintage bottlings, the label dates back to the 17th century when the Benedictine monk Dom Pierre Pérignon pioneered many of the techniques that make Champagne what it is today. But celebrated and storied as it may be, the illustrious label is not resting on its laurels.

Earlier this year, at the launch of its 2005 vintage, Dom announced an exciting new venture: a partnership with Spanish chef Ferran Adrià to define the wine.

Adrià is, of course, not just any chef. His restaurant El Bulli, which shot him to international fame, was renowned as a powerhouse of cutting-edge cooking – and as one of the most difficult dining rooms in which to score a reservation. Adrià closed its doors in 2011 and his moves since have been closely scrutinised by restaurant-watchers worldwide.

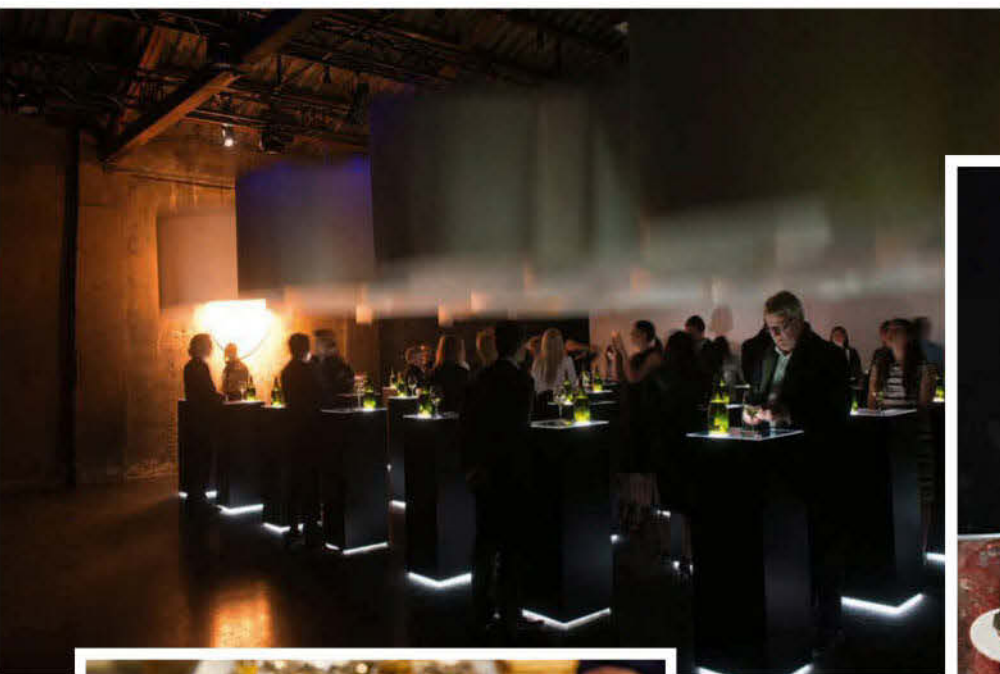
He has stepped away from the pans and into the creative and academic realm, launching the El Bulli Foundation, an initiative designed to “decode and

explore the mechanics of the creative process, to unlock the genome of creation”.

At El Bulli Lab in Barcelona, a 1500-square-metre, white-on-white space, partitions are scrawled with notes and illustrations, the floors piled with study material, and lengths of string join bites of information like an out-take from a this-guy's-a-genius montage in the movies. “Our motto,” Adrià says, “is feeding creativity.”

The foundation serves two purposes. On one hand, it's a gastronomic research facility with projects such as Bullipedia, a kind of online encyclopedia for food, in the works. It also acts as a creative agency of sorts, having worked with brands such as Lavazza to help dissect and develop its coffee. In Dom's case, it's breaking down the many facets of the wine and analysing them using a methodology Adrià calls “sapiens”.

“You can understand things in many different ways,” he says, “but we do so by studying the processes – how things are created, produced or reproduced, and how things are offered or sold... But also the experience, the way you give things, the way you receive things.”



A MATTER OF TASTE

Clockwise, from far left: Dom Pérignon tasting; goose barnacles with caviar from the Seamless menu; connecting ideas at the El Bulli Foundation's Dom lab; Adrià and his protégés; the theatrically darkened dining room; spherical green "olives" from the Intensity menu.



The partnership will see the Champagne house and Adrià work together over three years to “truly understand and define what makes Dom Pérignon Dom Pérignon”, through vigorous research into every aspect of the wine and the brand – from the engineering of its bottle to the behaviour of its “actors” (that’s sapiens-speak for consumers) and the anatomy of its bubbles at a microscopic level.

The collaboration comes at a crucial point for Dom Pérignon as a brand, says the winery’s chef de cave, Richard Geoffroy. “We have to keep reinventing ourselves. We felt at this stage in the history of Dom Pérignon we had to maybe think lateral through a third party and get the right methodology to have better self-knowledge.”

A partnership of this scale warrants a suitably significant début and, with much of the “decoding” of Dom Pérignon taking place at the Barcelona lab, the Catalan capital was a natural fit for the launch.

A palm-fringed corner of the Palo Alto Market complex, a former industrial space, provided an intriguing backdrop for the event: an intimate soirée for 40 food lovers (journalists and friends of Dom Pérignon among them) flown in from across the globe. The evening was billed as This is Not a Dinner and, in true Dom style, it was far from your average sit-down affair.

The formalities kicked off with a tasting in a blacked-out room lit purely by a constellation of mirrored podiums. Atop each sat a notebook, a pencil>



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Denver state of mind

Are we all trapped behind glass in some grim parallel universe? Or does it just feel like that in the Colorado capital? **AA Gill** ponders the big issues.

There ought to be a word for birds that get caught in airport terminals. You sit for hours in these great glass cathedrals to the faith that men can reach the heavens, and there's always a sparrow or a mynah bird or some oriental tit or a scabrous pigeon caught on the wrong side of the glass.

They flutter with non-comprehending despair and try to figure out how they managed to get into this grim parallel universe. They can see the huge sky, but something stops them flying off into it.

I have a suspicion that a small bird is put into every airport concourse by God to show us the hubris of imagining we are angels. The bird is quite plainly an allegory for us sitting here waiting for some late inbound flight to be serviced, or for passengers with children,

and gold, silver, aquamarine and tartan cards to board first. The little bird is a reminder that this airport is a false promise of freedom. That the departure board gives you a holy false witness. That, in fact, we are all caught behind glass and what we see out there is not achievable by buying a ticket. It isn't going to be faster with a gold card.

This flight of fancy, this piling up of vaguely theocratic metaphors and feathered truisms can go on and on for as long as the flight is delayed. But perhaps God just puts the small bird in the airport for the entertainment of those whose iPad batteries have run out or who can't get WiFi access.

God seems to be awesomely fond of allegory, and I have a strong suspicion that most of the weird stuff in the world was invented to make us think more fondly or

critically about the other more prosaic half. If you have ever asked, "Why did he make so many types of beetle?", the answer is probably: "To make you think about the things that aren't a beetle."

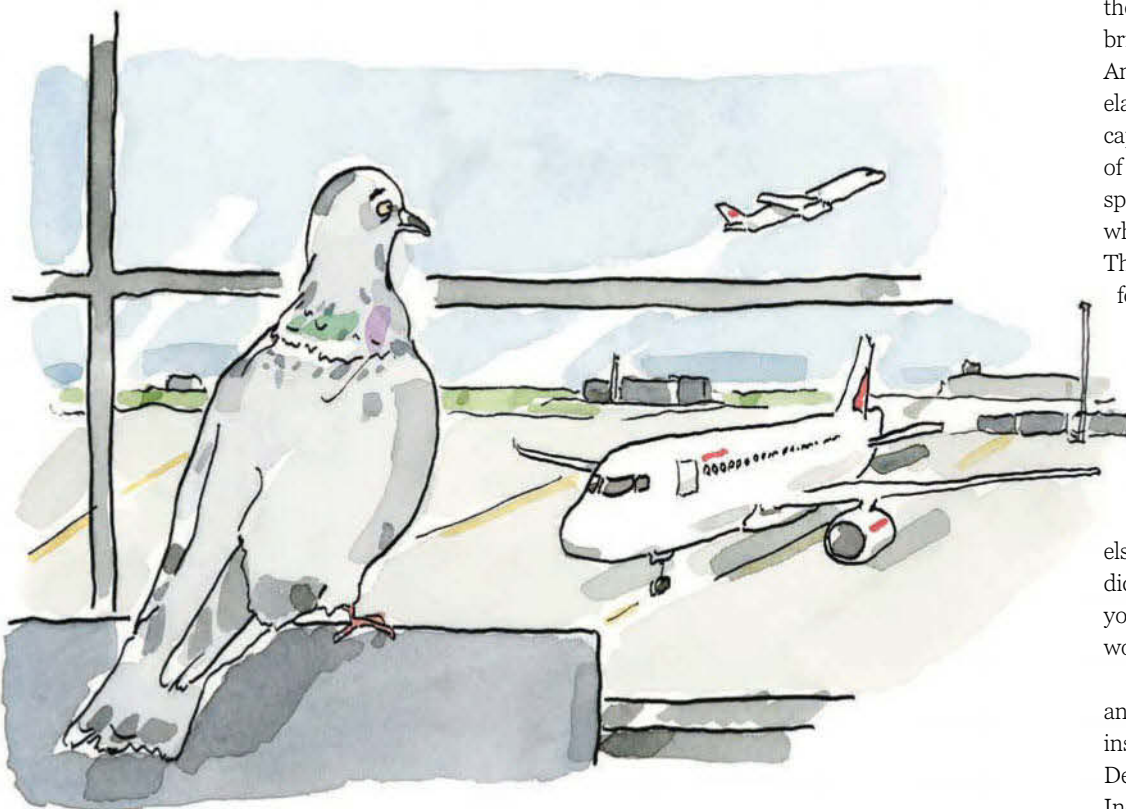
All of which brings me with a not altogether eloquent segue to Denver.

It was in Denver airport that I wrote in my junior reporter's notebook "There should be a word for birds trapped in airports." Both the bird and I were in Denver and I thought, "If I ever get out of this airport, I will no longer be in Denver, but if you, little bird, ever escaped through the glass to the other world, you will still be in Denver. I hope you're a sort of migrating bird, then you could go somewhere else, but knowing God's sense of humour, you're probably programmed to fly to Toronto, Denver's spiritual twin."

Denver sprawls across the great plain at the edge of the Rockies like a child's building bricks tipped onto a kitchen floor. Like most Americans, it has lateral spread and an elastic waist. It landed here through the caprice and chance of miners in the middle of the century before last, and was named spectacularly to curry favour with a politician who had already been kicked out of office. The silver it thought was going to be its fortune turned out to be somewhere else and the place avoided turning back into tumbleweed by building a railway to link up with the rest of the great West.

Denver prospered, became the capital of a new state, Colorado, and still can't believe its luck. People come here because they want to be somewhere else. Denver is a second city choice. If it didn't work out for you wherever you are, you think you'll be happier in Denver – life would be kinder, the air sweeter.

America is still a nation of fresh starts and second chances, and the migratory instinct of Americans is still to fly West. Denver is the perfect West – cowboys and Indians, without either. The only Indians are the photographs on the airport wall and a bronze statue in front of the State Capitol,



a hubristic building with a golden dome that is dazzled by the sun. And the only cowboys are the neon signs in bars and the posters in Western dressing-up shops, and another bronze statue in front of the town hall – a further impressive building that reflects the State Capitol.

Of course, most people born here can't wait to move and find somewhere with more guilt, more to be ashamed of and rather less gormless happiness and fresh air. When you come to the American West, particularly to the states with huge national parks, mountains and deserts, you're confronted with the truth that is both ancient and modern: nothing manmade out here can compete with the titanic splendour and awe of the surrounding nature.

I use "awe" not in the contemporary, youthful sense as short for "awesome", but in the older, biblical sense of terrified and mesmerised by the works of God. It is no accident that this great rumpled and blasted impressive country that stretches from the gulf to the Great Lakes has nurtured some of the most crackpot and ecstatic manifestations of religion.

Coming from Europe where almost everything you look at that is most beautiful is built by men in a landscape that is at best a servile garden – this is in itself odd and remarkable. Denver and all the towns, cities, villages and lonely cabins that people have put here appear to be only renting their tenure from the great ethereal landlord who, with a shrug of weather, could consign them all to dust.

Denver moves slowly – people don't rush or hustle in this town. Its motto is not "We try harder"; it's "We know our place in the scheme of things". It's a town that understands the limits of ambition in the face of the vastness of the elements. It doesn't read much or look at much. It doesn't think a great deal. But it does exercise. There's nothing Denver likes more than the grip of Lycra and the sound of Velcro, and the feeling that your lungs are being ripped out your back. They do a lot of effortful communing with the ancient spirits of the landscape.

I came to Denver to see a city that has legalised the recreational use of marijuana and, after a week, my chief observation is: how can they tell? What's the difference?



I don't know whether Denver is the bird or the birdcage, or whether it is the departure lounge at the end of life's railway. But there ought to be a word for waking up in Denver and realising that you're not just in Denver, you're still in Denver. ●

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EVENT



A pig's tale

From canapés to whimsical dessert, 10 years of Porkstar was marked with a celebration of pork, writes **Maya Kerthyasa**.

HOG HEAVEN

Clockwise from top left: Mitch Edwards and Kylie Roberts of Porkstar; braised pig's tail with prawn bisque; Sydney's Strand Arcade; "Miss Piggy" dessert; pork spare rib; chefs on duty (from left) Brent Savage, Christine Manfield, Nino Zoccali and Colin Fassnidge.

How do you pay fitting tribute to one of the more distinctive culinary marketing campaigns of the last decade? If you're Australian Pork, the answer is simple. (Hint: it's not with chicken.)

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of Porkstar, the marketing initiative launched to put the protein back on Australian menus, the industry body hosted a dinner in Sydney for a hundred of the campaign's strongest supporters, going the whole hog and more.

The Strand Arcade made a striking setting for the event, transformed for the night to a glam dining room with one long candlelit table, the scene reminiscent of The Great Hall in Harry Potter's Hogwarts.

The magic continued on the plate, with four of Porkstar's most prominent chef advocates – Christine Manfield, Four in Hand's Colin Fassnidge (Sydney's "prince of pork"), Brent Savage of Bentley and Pendolino's Nino Zoccali – in the kitchen.

"We chose them because they're among the chefs we have the utmost respect for," Australian Pork's marketing manager, Mitch Edwards, said. "They've helped the Porkstar program become what it is and we wanted to celebrate them on the night."

Pork, naturally, was the star, making its début in Savage's canapés of puffed pork skin topped with scallop-roe cream, and prosciutto-wrapped grissini with muntry berries.

Fassnidge prepared an entrée of braised and crumbed pig's tail in a bowl of prawn bisque with pickled mussels, seaweed and dollops of potato and sage purée. Zoccali, meanwhile, presented a gutsy pork spare rib with parsnip and parsley-root purée, carrot and fennel salad and Pendolino's 2015 first harvest extra-virgin olive oil. Manfield rose to the porcine dessert challenge with her "Miss Piggy" creation: a sweet, salty, smoky dish of bacon-caramel ice-cream and chunks of mango wrapped in a buttery biscuit cone and topped with sherbet-laced fairy floss.

It was an apt way to close a celebration of milestones and camaraderie, though the party continues for the team at Australian Pork. "We're looking at kicking off the next 10 years... and continuing to inspire chefs, through chefs, to get creative with pork," said Edwards. ●



Premier league

Presenting the nominees for this year's *Gourmet Traveller* Restaurant Awards, our tribute to the nation's finest talents in the kitchen, on the pour and on the floor.

Hey Australia, slow down – you're opening so many great places to eat and drink it's almost getting hard to keep up. But keep up we have, tirelessly taking knife and fork, chopstick and spoon in hand, combing the country for the sort of eating and drinking experiences that will brighten your day. It could be something as involved as a tasting menu from a talented chef or as simple-seeming (and satisfying) as a well-poured drink, or a friendly face working the dining-room floor.

We invite you to dig in to this shortlist of great Australian talent – some new, some established – in the following pages and then join us in celebrating them when we announce the winners of our restaurant awards in our September issue in a few short weeks.

WORDS MAX ALLEN, FIONA DONNELLY, SUE DYSON & ROGER McSHANE,
MICHAEL HARDEN, PAT NOURSE, DAVID SLY & MAX VEENHUYZEN

RESTAURANT AWARDS

NEW RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

FRANKLIN,
HOBART

Franklin, Hobart

The natural, clipped lines of this room are almost analogous to David Moyle's cooking, if not precisely his slightly wild and untamed person. Cooked in large part in a massive bespoke Scotch oven, Moyle's food is spare but created with smarts enough to make it focused rather than anything less than generous. Pristine ingredients aren't obscured by superfluous garnishes, whether it's the day's best raw fish with saltbush and horseradish, or wood-roasted abalone with buckwheat congee.

IN SHORT A cool, refreshing southerly.

Africola, Adelaide

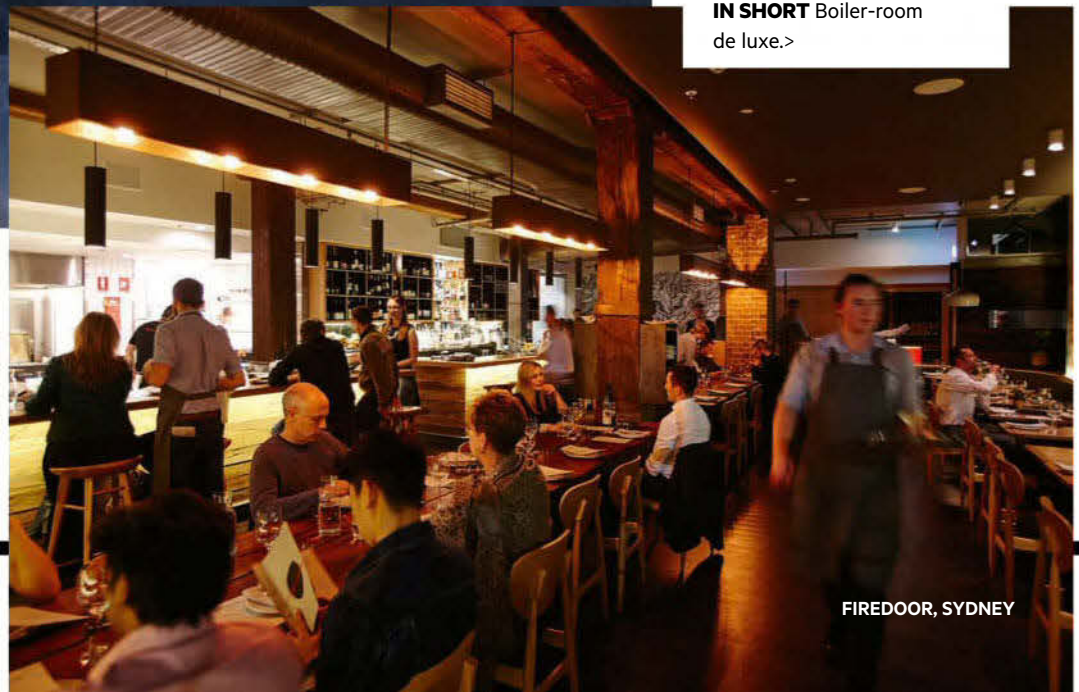
Emerging from the fervid imaginations of chef Duncan Welgemoed and graphic designer James Brown, Africola is edgy and a little bit mad, transmuting South African culinary inspiration into a pocket of Adelaide bohemia. It works wonderfully, with great peri-peri chicken and boerewors from the grill offset by the delicious likes of raw squid with young coconut, fermented kohlrabi and green mango. Linger, drink great wine and house-brewed beer at the riotously decorated bar all night long, and celebrate.

IN SHORT Taste Africa in 3D – in Adelaide.

Firedoor, Sydney

Lennox Hastie is a unique talent (as we'll see under the Best New Talent category), and as singular as his vision for the food at Firedoor may be, he's been just as uncompromising with the other aspects of the experience. Backed by The Fink Group (they of Quay and Bennelong fame), Hastie has created a full-service and richly appealing setting for his cuisine – comfortable, elegant and entirely simpático with what's going on in the kitchen.

IN SHORT Boiler-room de luxe.>



FIREDOOR, SYDNEY

SOMMELIER OF THE YEAR

Raffaele Mastrovincenzo, Kappo, Melbourne

You have to be nimble to pair drinks with a constantly changing, seasonally influenced menu like the one at Kappo. Raffaele Mastrovincenzo – compact, dapper, calm – has proven himself a master of the match at Attica and Vue de Monde, but now works with sakes from long-established producers, wines from small, interesting, sometimes benchmark houses from the Old and New Worlds, and adds fun stuff like umeshu into the mix. At Kappo, this savvy Roman shows just how well he understands the art of food and drink matching.

IN SHORT The dexterous Italian.

Ian Trinkle, Aria Brisbane

Gifted sommeliers have an instinct when it comes to letting things breathe. Ian Trinkle will happily sell you the '85 Romanée-Conti Grand Echezeaux, but if you get half as excited as he will about the macabeu-grenache blanc match he'll suggest with your entrée of Moreton Bay bug, jamón and spiced cauliflower, you'll really make his day. He also presides over an entire section dedicated to Queensland's Granite Belt. Not bad going for a Philadelphian.

IN SHORT Well-structured and seriously smooth.

Cassaly Fitzgerald, Appellation, Marananga

Given that she's been a member of the Appellation team since 2008 and is an Eden Valley native, it might

be understating things to say that Cassaly Fitzgerald has a feel for the region. She knows the Barossa's best intimately, and buys many of the local producers' small-batch experiments exclusively, presenting them alongside global wine benchmarks in pairings that are as respectful and carefully crafted as Appellation's dégustations.

IN SHORT Your ideal guide to the deeper Barossa.



IAN TRINKLE,
ARIA BRISBANE



RAFFAELE
MASTROVINCENTO, KAPPO



CASSALY FITZGERALD,
APPELLATION

WINE LIST
OF THE YEAR



FARMHOUSE RESTAURANT AT
PIALLIGO ESTATE'S MUSCOVY DUCK,
MUSCAT GRAPES, BLACK RADISH,
BEETROOT AND BONE MARROW

Billy Kwong, Sydney

The trend for organic, artisan and natural continues to build on restaurant lists across the country – almost to the point where wines considered radical just a couple of years ago are now seen as positively mainstream. Few lists embrace this trend with as much flair and commitment as the list at Billy Kwong. We particularly applaud the Project Wines – and beers and spirits – selected or produced exclusively for the restaurant.

IN SHORT Beyond the call of duty.

Fleet, Brunswick Heads

Fleet's list is a great example of so many encouraging restaurant trends: it's very short (just 27 wines) but exquisitely well-chosen; almost all the wines are available by the glass; the emphasis is on organic, biodynamic, natural and small-scale; the wines are arranged by style rather than grape variety or region; and all have their own articulate, enticing description of provenance, maker and flavour. At Fleet, less is clearly more.

IN SHORT Small but perfectly formed.

Farmhouse Restaurant at Pialligo Estate, Canberra

Over the past few years Pialligo Estate's reputation has been founded on the award-winning bacon and cured salmon emerging from its smokehouse. Now Canberra residents and visitors are beating a path to the recently opened restaurant's door, both for the food and the extraordinarily generous wine list. There's such depth in the list's four pages (back vintages!), such breadth (regional wines! international wines! classic wines! natural wines! obscure wines! mainstream wines!) and such welcome hospitality (seriously too-good-to-be-true prices!).

IN SHORT Almost too good to be true.>



BILLY KWONG, SYDNEY



FLEET,
BRUNSWICK HEADS

RESTAURANT AWARDS

REGIONAL RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR



FLEET, BRUNSWICK HEADS,
AND ITS SWEETBREAD
SCHNITZEL SANDWICH

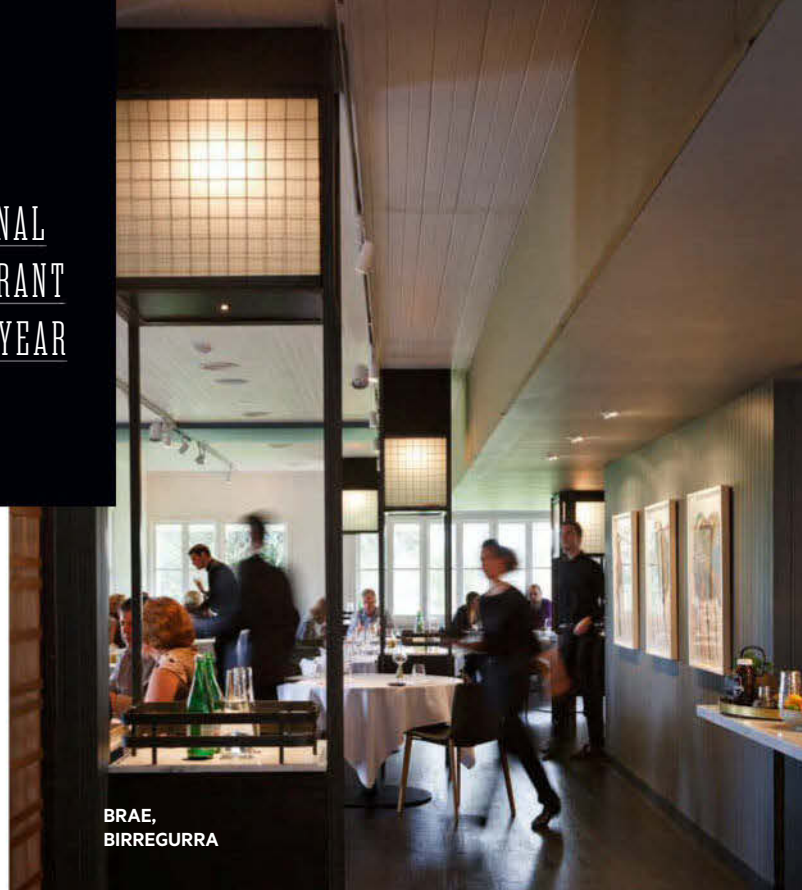


Brae, Birregurra

Dan Hunter breathes life into the regional-dining platitudes. Not only does he grow and raise much of his own produce while sourcing most the rest from local producers, the way he combines flavours and plates his food seems to sketch the countryside surrounding his renovated farmhouse restaurant. It's original, pretty and intelligent food, certainly, but it's also comforting and flavoured robustly enough that you feel you're eating a meal, rather than a chef's ego. **IN SHORT** Set the GPS and just do it.

Fleet, Brunswick Heads

Opening a 15-seat restaurant specialising in the far-off-the-beaten-track likes of sweetbread schnitzel sandwiches, grilled cos with black vinegar and white pepper, and artisan-made wines is a bold move anywhere. Opening it, well, far off the beaten track seems like a leap of culinary faith. Whatever the thinking in choosing the small New South Wales coastal town of Brunswick Heads for Fleet, former Loam talents Astrid McCormack and Josh Lewis have created something compelling. **IN SHORT** Sun, surf, sweetbreads and syrah.



BRAE,
BIRREGURRA

Three Blue Ducks, Byron Bay

And speaking of the surf life, for all the jokes that have been made about Grant and Mark LaBrooy, and Darren Robertson moving from Bronte to Byron to deepen their tans, the Three Blue Ducks chefs have stunned restaurant-watchers with the scope and ambition of their new eatery. Eco-ambitious, exciting, and fun for the whole family, the restaurant-store-café-farm-lifestyle cult is a head-turner for all the right reasons, combining idealism and good cooking in healthy measure.

IN SHORT Much more than just Ducks flying north for winter.



THREE BLUE DUCKS,
BYRON BAY

Randolph Cheung, Minamishima, Melbourne

Randolph Cheung has been one of the notable faces in wine in Melbourne for around 25 years, both at his own restaurants, Asiana and Azalea, and during stints as sommelier at Estelle, Saint Crispin, The Atlantic and Flower Drum. Little surprise, then, that he was snapped up for a role at Minamishima. Better still, for those dining in what is now arguably Australia's best sushi restaurant, Cheung has now broadened his brief to look after the floor as a whole. His excellent sense of hospitality, and his charm, familiarity and experience make for a smooth and assured experience, and you know you can kick back because everything is already under control.

IN SHORT A steady hand.

Cam Fairbairn, Acme, Sydney

One of the hippest restaurants to have opened in Sydney in years, Acme is home to everything – from cutting-edge food to the out-there wine list and bass-thumping soundtrack – that might prompt you to expect the aloof, the too-cool-for-school, and the disingenuous on the floor. Which leaves you utterly unprepared for the startling warmth of Cam Fairbairn's welcome when you step through the door. Bin all the Gen-Y clichés – team Acme works hard to make sure you have a good time, and no one makes it look more fun than Fairbairn.

IN SHORT Genuinely hospitable hospitality.

RANDOLPH CHEUNG,
MINAMISHIMA



MAÎTRE D' OF THE YEAR

Vanessa Crichton, Rosetta, Melbourne

Knowing that Vanessa Crichton is general manager of three of Neil Perry's Melbourne restaurants (Rockpool Bar & Grill, Spice Temple, Rosetta), plus his Perth outpost of Rockpool Bar & Grill makes her unflappable calm, astounding attention to detail and seemingly constant presence on the floor of those restaurants even more remarkable. Being able to flip between steakhouse, regional Chinese and big-ticket Italian without breaking stride is a tribute to Crichton's years of experience in the trade, certainly, but also to her warmth and innate sense of hospitality.

IN SHORT Making the hard yards look easy.>

VANESSA CRICHTON,
ROSETTA



CAM FAIRBAIRN,
ACME



BAR OF THE YEAR

Bar Clarine, Melbourne

The folks behind fried-chicken joint Belle's Hot Chicken have honed their admiration for natural wine at this chic, compact, self-contained wine bar sitting right next door to the rollicking mothership. A constantly changing, page-long wine list is cleverly put together to challenge any notion that all natural wines are created equal, plumbing the spectrum from the super-funky to the super-refined. Add a kitchen pumping out small, interesting wine-friendly dishes – a textbook tête de porc, wild mushrooms with grits and eggs, mignonette with malted onion and Beaufort cheese – and you have a place that's both specialised and special.

IN SHORT Good times, naturally.

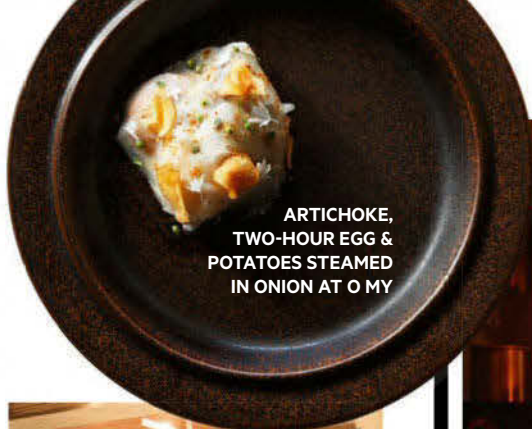
The Gresham, Brisbane

This handsome city-centre bar in the historic 19th-century Queensland National Bank building feels like it has graced Queen Street forever. It's the only bar in Queensland operating under a heritage licence – which handily allows it to stay open until 3am. Though the drapes are grand, there's nothing too forced here. The bartending is as relaxed as the cocktails are tight, while the back-bar's current whisky bent (head bartender Ryan Lane will happily tailor you a flight taking you pretty much anywhere you like) has evolved through demand rather design.

IN SHORT A bar to lift your spirits.



THE GRESHAM,
BRISBANE



ARTICHOKE,
TWO-HOUR EGG &
POTATOES STEAMED
IN OIL AT O MY



BAR CLARINE, MELBOURNE

This Must Be the Place, Sydney

Taking not one but two of the country's most distinguished cocktail talents and setting them up in a bar specialising in Spritzes may at first seem like getting Ben Shewry and Peter Gilmore to shutter Attica and Quay to open a salad-sandwich stand. But by crikey Luke Ashton and Charlie Ainsbury make a Spritz to be reckoned with. And should your tastes run to something a bit less light and fizzy, they can instead make you... well, pretty much anything, because they both have a rich understanding of the cocktail canon complemented by a knack for reading their customers' needs.

IN SHORT This is, in fact, the place.



THE GLOSS
COCKTAIL AT
THIS MUST BE THE
PLACE, SYDNEY

FEDERICO
ZANELLATO,
LUMI DINING



BEST NEW TALENT

LENNOX HASTIE,
FIREDOOR



Lennox Hastie, Firedoor, Sydney

Cooking with fire connotes all kinds of rusticity. Step into Firedoor, though, and Lennox Hastie will turn those preconceptions on their heads. As a wielder of the flame, his signatures are precision and subtlety. His highly considered cuisine is light, tight and like nothing anyone else is doing in the country. He has moved the goalposts for how good grilling can be, regardless of whether it's scary-fresh seafood, ultra-aged steak or plain old greens.

IN SHORT A new kind of delicious born from the oldest of cooking traditions.

Federico Zanellato, LuMi Dining, Sydney

What a fertile place Federico Zanellato's imagination must be. As head chef at Ormeaggio at The Spit for several years, he led the restaurant to new heights, incorporating the contemporary smarts he honed at the likes of Noma, but without losing that essential connection to Italy along the way. And the menu he writes for his own restaurant, which he opened on the inner harbour in Sydney late last year, keeps pushing the envelope, looking to Asia for inspiration. When he connects Italian tradition with the likes of miso, yuzu and daikon, the result isn't so much seamless – it's fireworks of the tastiest kind.

IN SHORT Think global, eat spaghetti alla chitarra.

COOK, EAT, FLY, SLEEP.

Tyson, Blayne & Chayse Bertoncello, O My, Melbourne

The idea of three brothers, all in their twenties, opening a dégustation-only restaurant they renovated themselves on the very outskirts of Melbourne could so easily have gone terribly wrong or, at the very least, made no noise outside of Beaconsfield. But the Bertoncello brothers (Blayne and Tyson in the kitchen, little brother Chayse working the floor and wine list) are the real deal. Their food is original, exciting, engaging and looks good, the attitude generous and hospitable. They even grow a lot of the produce themselves. More, please.

IN SHORT Brothers are doing it for themselves. ●

FROM LEFT: TYSON,
CHAYSE AND BLAYNE
BERTONCELLO, O MY



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Windows Phones
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Clockwise from far left:
Penfolds red winemaker
Stephanie Dutton with
guests; Magill Estate
Restaurant; GT's Pat Nourse
introduces co-head chefs
Emma McCaskill and Scott
Huggins; 2008 Penfolds Bin
169 Cabernet Sauvignon
paired with Mayura wagyu.

Perfect match

Penfolds wines shone at a specially designed showcase dinner at Magill Estate Restaurant.

Gourmet Traveller readers recently attended a special dinner at Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant in Adelaide. Co-head chefs Emma McCaskill and Scott Huggins, who were named Best New Talent at the *Gourmet Traveller* 2015 Restaurant Awards, prepared a suite of dishes paired with a selection of wines hand-picked from the Penfolds cellars and expertly matched to the menu for the occasion.

The event was hosted by *Gourmet Traveller's* deputy editor, Pat Nourse, who introduced the chefs to diners, alongside Penfolds red winemaker, Stephanie Dutton, who brought her wealth of experience and vinous insight to the evening. She guided guests through each of the wines, as one exquisite dish after another emerged from the kitchen.

Menu highlights included the Mayura wagyu, which was perfectly paired to the 2008 Penfolds Bin 169 Cabernet Sauvignon, and the baked cheesecake with apple, beautifully matched with the Penfolds Father Grand Tawny.

Set overlooking the vineyards with the Adelaide skyline as a backdrop, this special event was a truly fitting way to showcase the Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant experience.

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Penfolds

PENFOLDS
MAGILL ESTATE
RESTAURANT

AUGUST 2015

food

Set the table for generous spreads with flavours from the East, America's South and our national capital's finest.

Monster bites Sean McConnell's thoughtful, inventive food has wowed diners at Monster in the year since it opened. Here's a taste of why.

Smashing pumpkins There's more to pumpkin than soup – it's right at home in sage-infused pasta parcels, fragrant rice and more.

Made in America Sydney's Hartsyard gives up the goods on its most finger-lickin' dishes in a new book. We've got the highlights.

Winter's table Brigitte Hafner creates a winter menu inspired by far-flung exotic climes. The table is set – time to open the wine.

Gung-ho Lee Ho Fook won renown for its modern spin on popular Chinese classics, and now it's moving uptown. Which calls for a celebration, banquet-style.






MONSTER bites

Sean McConnell's thoughtful, inventive food has wowed diners at Monster in the year since it opened at Canberra's Hotel Hotel. Here's a taste of why.

RECIPES **SEAN MCCONNELL** WORDS **MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD** PHOTOGRAPHY **BEN DEARNLEY**
STYLING **EMMA KNOWLES** DRINK SUGGESTIONS **MICHAEL GRAY**



Kingfish crudo, burnt ruby
grapefruit, pickled fennel and
anchovy (RECIPE P97)

PEOPLE PEOPLE

Opposite: maître d'
Michael Gray (seated)
and Sean McConnell.
Vintage portrait,
artist unknown.

You won't see Sean McConnell sending out club sandwiches at Monster. Not a chance. Despite the restaurant's location in the lobby of Canberra's Hotel Hotel, the chef steers clear of the traditional trappings. "We avoid everything you would associate with bad hotel food," says McConnell. "No breakfast buffets here."

Monster's menu balances warm familiarity with surprise. McConnell turns out simple, vibrant combinations that might see only three or four ingredients on the plate, but still have plenty to say. Natural bedfellows such as roasted beets, almond and dill are upgraded with cow's milk shankleesh, while a beautifully braised piece of lamb (Monster's most popular dish to date) combines pistachios, pomegranate and yoghurt beneath sheets of crisp brik pastry. As the Melbourne-born chef puts it, "Nothing is ever too tricked up."


McConnell credits travelling, and particularly his time working in Vanuatu, as key to his thoughtful cooking style. "It kind of developed out of necessity," he says. "Produce is an ongoing problem in the Pacific and to find what I needed I really had to get my hands dirty."

That sense of adventure is very much alive in the Monster kitchen. McConnell sources most of his produce from independent growers and enjoys foraging. "I can jump in my car, drive 16 minutes and pick mushrooms," he says.

One of six children, McConnell will welcome his second child in August. "Mum and Dad will have nine grandchildren by Christmas," he says. That's a lot of mouths to feed, but between himself and his chef brothers Andrew (of Melbourne's Cutler & Co, Cumulus Inc and Supernormal, among others), and Matt (Bar Lourinhã) no one's likely to starve.

The recipes featured here – a mash-up of Monster favourites across breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack-time (hello, yabby jaffle) – capture the same sense of spontaneity and satisfaction that goes along with a visit to Hotel Hotel.

Entertaining can be a monster task in itself. McConnell's advice? "Cook something you love and that you know your friends will love, and get everyone involved," he says. "And drinks. I rarely entertain without a glass of wine in my hand." *Monster, New Acton Nishi, 25 Edinburgh Ave, Canberra, ACT, (02) 6287 6287, hotel-hotel.com.au*



Yabby jaffles



Yabby jaffles

"A version of the yabby jaffle first came about at Močan & Green Grout, where we served the cooked yabby meat with crème fraîche and horseradish on brioche toast as an appetiser," says Sean McConnell. "The yabby jaffle was created during a very late-night menu-planning session with my friend Bernd Brademann from A Baker. As much as anything, I like how those two words roll off the tongue together. They are super-tasty, though."

Prep time 20 mins, cook 20 mins (plus freezing)

Makes 6

- 18 live yabbies (see note)
- 100 gm crème fraîche
- 30 gm finely grated horseradish
- 5 small golden shallots, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp finely chopped chives
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Softened butter, for spreading
- 12 slices fluffy white sandwich bread
- 120 gm (1½ cups) grated Gruyère

Court-bouillon

- 500 ml dry white wine
- 2 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 onions, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- A few parsley stalks

1 Place yabbies in freezer in preparation to despatch (see cook's notes p176). Meanwhile, for court-bouillon, place ingredients and 4 litres water in a large saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer, add yabbies in batches and simmer until yabbies turn pink (about 4 minutes). Remove with tongs and refresh in iced water.

Drain and peel as you would prawns, then chop into 1cm dice and refrigerate until required.

2 Heat a jaffle iron. Combine the crème fraîche, horseradish, shallots, chives and lemon juice, add yabby meat and season with sea salt to taste. Butter bread slices with softened butter and place half the slices butter-side down on a sheet of baking paper. Spread a generous amount of the yabby mixture on top, scatter with Gruyère and sandwich with remaining bread, butter-side up. Toast in a jaffle iron until golden brown and serve.

Note Live yabbies need to be ordered from your fishmonger, or you can substitute 36 medium prawns; poach them in a similar method as the yabbies or buy cooked prawns.

Wine suggestion 2009 Gallagher Blanc de Blancs.

Kingfish crudo, burnt ruby grapefruit, pickled fennel and anchovy

"Since day one, we've always tried to feature raw or cured seafood on the bar menu," says McConnell.

"The clean and delicate flavours are the perfect way to start a meal. I use Hiramasa kingfish, farmed in South Australia. It's a super-consistent product and is readily available all year round." Begin this recipe at least three days ahead to pickle the fennel.

Prep time 40 mins, cook 5 mins (plus curing, pickling)

Serves 6 (pictured p95)

- 2 ruby grapefruit, peeled and segmented
- 3 radishes, very thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 12 nasturtium leaves
- 125 gm Ortiz anchovies
- 125 ml (½ cup) extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 2 lemons
- Pickled fennel**
- 3 baby fennel bulbs, fronds reserved for curing mixture
- 150 ml rice wine vinegar
- 110 gm (½ cup) white sugar
- Cured kingfish**
- 60 gm (½ cup) salt flakes (McConnell uses Murray River salt)
- 90 gm white sugar
- 2 tbsp coriander seeds, roasted and lightly crushed
- 2 tbsp fennel seeds, roasted and lightly crushed
- Fronds from 3 heads of baby fennel, coarsely chopped
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 500 gm kingfish fillet, skin off, blood line removed

1 For pickled fennel, halve fennel lengthways, remove cores, then thinly slice lengthways on a mandolin and place in a preserving jar. Stir vinegar, sugar, 225ml water and a pinch of salt in a saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves, bring to a simmer, then pour over fennel. Cool to room temperature, then seal and refrigerate for at least 3 days. Pickled fennel keeps in a sealed container for two months and develops in flavour with time. This recipe makes more than you need, but it's handy to have in the fridge.

2 For cured kingfish, combine ingredients except kingfish in a bowl. Place kingfish in a deep tray or dish, pour salt mixture over, turn fillet to coat, then cover and refrigerate for 4 hours. Rinse off curing mixture, pat kingfish dry with paper towels, wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate until required. This step can be done up to a day in advance.

3 Place grapefruit segments on an oven tray and caramelise the surface with a blowtorch (or do this under a hot grill). Slice kingfish across the grain into 5mm slices and arrange on serving plates or a platter. Scatter with grapefruit, nasturtiums, radish, anchovies and a little pickled fennel. Mix olive oil and lemon juice in a bowl, season to taste, drizzle over kingfish and serve.

Wine suggestion 2015 Eden Road Canberra Riesling.

Black barley, wild rice, candied almonds, barberry and marinated chèvre

Prep time 25 mins, cook 45 mins

Serves 6 (pictured p98)

- 200 gm black barley
- 250 gm wild rice
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- 2 tbsp dried barberries
- 2 tbsp sumac
- Olive oil, to taste
- Juice and finely grated rind of 1½ lemons, or to taste
- 100 gm marinated chèvre or goat's curd
- 2 tbsp dried rose petals
- Candied almonds**
- 1½ tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp rosewater, or to taste
- 50 gm slivered almonds

1 For candied almonds, preheat oven to 180C and line a baking tray with baking paper. Stir sugar, a splash of rosewater and 2 tbsp water in a saucepan over low heat until sugar dissolves. Add almonds, stir to coat, then tip onto tray and bake, stirring occasionally, until lightly caramelised (10-12 minutes). Set aside.

2 Meanwhile, place barley and 1 litre cold salted water in a saucepan and 200gm wild rice and 1 litre cold salted water in another saucepan. Bring both to the boil over medium-high heat, then reduce to medium and simmer until tender but not falling apart (20-30 minutes). Drain and set aside.

3 Heat the vegetable oil in a saucepan to 200C. Add remaining wild rice and fry until puffed (20-30 seconds; be careful, hot oil will spit as the grains puff up). Remove with a metal sieve and drain on paper towels.

4 Toss barley and wild rice with barberries, sumac, a splash of olive oil, and lemon juice and rind, and season to taste. Crumble marinated chèvre or spoon goat's curd into a serving bowl or onto a platter, arrange the salad on top, scatter with rose petals, candied almonds and puffed wild rice and serve.

Wine suggestion 2014 Ravensworth "The Grainery", a marsanne-roussanne-viognier blend.>




Black barley, wild rice, candied almonds, barberry and marinated chèvre (RECIPE P97)



Roast beetroot with shankleesh, onion, almonds and dill (RECIPE P101)





Slow-roasted lamb shoulder
with pistachios, pomegranate
and vine leaves (RECIPE P101)

“This lamb, by far our most popular dish, is loosely based on a dish I had in Istanbul. The meat was *delicately spiced, perfectly cooked* over coals, and served simply with a dollop of labne, pomegranate seeds, pistachios and crisp flatbread.”



Celeriac, Jerusalem artichokes, puffed rice and parmesan



Slow-roasted lamb shoulder with pistachios, pomegranate and vine leaves

"By far our most popular dish at Monster, this is in fact loosely based on a dish I had in Istanbul years ago at a restaurant called Antiochia, in Beyoğlu," says McConnell. "Antiochia specialises in regional cuisine from Antakya, in the Hatay region of Turkey. The meat was delicately spiced, perfectly cooked over coals, and served simply with a dollop of labne, pomegranate seeds, pistachios and crisp flatbread, cooked over coals. At Monster, we've added crisp vine leaves and substituted the flatbread with brik pastry." Begin this recipe a day ahead to marinate the lamb.

Prep time 40 mins, cook 8½ hrs

Serves 6 (pictured p99)

- 3 tbs each cumin seeds and coriander seeds
- 1 tbs fennel seeds
- 1 cinnamon quill
- 25 gm ginger
- 4 garlic cloves
- 125 ml (½ cup) olive oil
- 60 ml (¼ cup) pomegranate molasses
- Finely grated rind of 2 lemons
- 1 lamb shoulder on the bone (2.4kg)
- 500 ml red wine
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) pomegranate molasses
- 500 gm labne
- Pomegranate seeds and crushed roasted pistachio kernels, to serve
- Crisp brik pastry**
- 8 sheets brik pastry
- 100 ml clarified butter
- Crisp vine leaves**
- 6 vine leaves in brine
- Olive oil, for brushing

1 Dry-roast spices in a frying pan over low heat until fragrant (see cook's notes p176), then grind in a spice blender or finely crush with a mortar and pestle while still warm and place in a bowl. Grate ginger and garlic on a microplane straight into the spice mixture, then add olive oil, molasses and lemon rind. Score fat side of the lamb and season with 2 tsp sea salt and ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper, then rub spice mixture into meat (2 minutes). Cover and refrigerate overnight.

2 For brik pastry, preheat oven to 180C. Brush a sheet of pastry with clarified butter, top with another sheet of pastry and repeat, finishing with butter. Place between 2 baking trays and bake until golden brown (10-12 minutes). Leave to cool, then break into rough pieces.

3 For vine leaves, reduce oven to 160C. Soak leaves in cold water for 5 minutes to remove excess salt, then place flat on paper towels. Cover with another layer of paper towels, pat to remove excess moisture, then brush both sides of each leaf with oil and place flat on a baking tray. Cover with another baking tray and bake until dry and crisp (10-12 minutes). Set aside.

4 Preheat oven to 100C. Place marinated lamb in a roasting pan, add 500ml water to pan, cover with baking paper then foil and roast until meat is falling from the bone (about 7 hours). Remove foil and paper, increase oven to 180C and roast

until browned (40-45 minutes). Remove lamb from pan (reserve pan juices), rest for 30 minutes, then break into large pieces. Keep warm or if preparing ahead, cover and refrigerate.

5 Pour pan juices into a saucepan, add wine and pomegranate molasses, bring to the boil and cook until reduced to a jus consistency (10-12 minutes). Preheat oven to 200C. Place lamb and jus in an ovenproof pan, bring to the boil, then bake in oven until liquid reduces slightly and lamb begins to caramelise (10-15 minutes). Dollop labne into a bowl, top with lamb, then pour jus over. Scatter with pomegranate seeds and pistachios, top with vine leaves and shards of brik pastry and serve.

Wine suggestion 2013 Clonakilla O'Riada Shiraz.

Celeriac, Jerusalem artichokes, puffed rice and parmesan

"The seasonal availability of these two root vegetables makes them natural bedfellows," says McConnell. "We add puffed wild rice for texture and parmesan for a hit of umami. Be sure to use top-quality parmesan; at Monster we use 24-month-old Parmigiano-Reggiano."

Prep time 25 mins, cook 1 hr

Serves 6

- 2 celeriac, peeled and diced into 2cm cubes
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed with back of a knife
- 2 rosemary sprigs
- 500 ml (2 cups) milk
- 1 kg Jerusalem artichokes, unpeeled
- 200 gm butter, diced
- A few sprigs of thyme
- 3 fresh bay leaves
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- 50 gm wild rice
- 100 gm Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Sunflower shoots, to serve

1 Place celeriac, garlic, rosemary and milk in a saucepan over medium heat, bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer until celeriac is tender (25-30 minutes). Drain, discarding herbs and reserving milk. Return to pan and purée with a hand-held blender until smooth, adding enough milk to reach a thick consistency that holds its shape. Season to taste and keep warm.

2 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 180C. Spread Jerusalem artichokes in a roasting pan, scatter with butter, thyme and bay leaves, season to taste and drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 5 minutes, then remove from oven, turn artichokes and return to oven. Roast, turning artichokes frequently, until evenly caramelised and tender, but with a little crunch (20-25 minutes). Keep warm.

3 Meanwhile, heat oil in a deep saucepan to 200C. Add rice and deep-fry until puffed (20-30 seconds; be careful, hot oil will spit). Remove with a metal sieve and drain on paper towels.

4 To serve, spoon celeriac purée onto a platter, arrange Jerusalem artichokes around and drizzle with a little extra-virgin olive oil. Using a fine microplane or grater, grate Parmigiano very generously over the top, and scatter with sunflower shoots and puffed rice.

Wine suggestion 2013 Mount Majura Chardonnay.

Roast beetroot with shankleesh, onion, almonds and dill

"This beetroot dish came along in autumn this year as a vegetarian item on our share-plate menu," says McConnell. "The distinct Middle Eastern flavours work perfectly alongside our lamb dish. Shankleesh is available at any good Middle Eastern deli." Begin this recipe three days ahead to pickle the onion.

Prep time 40 mins, cook 45 mins (plus pickling)

Serves 6 (pictured p98)

- 110 gm (½ cup) caster sugar
- 125 ml (½ cup) Sherry vinegar
- 5 beetroot, trimmed and scrubbed
- Rock salt, for roasting
- 160 gm (1 cup) natural almonds, roasted and coarsely chopped
- 3 baby beetroot, such as Chioggia, or watermelon radish, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 150 gm shankleesh, coarsely crumbled
- ¾ cup dill sprigs (about 1 bunch), plus extra to garnish
- Pickled onion petals**
- 250 ml (1 cup) white wine vinegar
- 100 gm white sugar
- 2 tbs black peppercorns
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 10 pickling onions, peeled and halved through the core
- Beetroot vinaigrette**
- 250 ml (1 cup) beetroot juice
- 60 gm raspberries (about ½ punnet)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) raspberry vinegar
- 2 tbs extra-virgin olive oil

1 For pickled onion petals, stir vinegar, sugar, peppercorns, bay leaves and 360ml water in a saucepan over medium heat to dissolve sugar, then bring to the simmer, add onions and simmer until beginning to soften (4-5 minutes). Transfer to a sterile container (see cook's notes p176), seal and cool to room temperature, then refrigerate for 3 days before using. Pickled onions will keep refrigerated for several months.

2 Preheat oven to 180C. Stir sugar and 2 tbs water in a small saucepan over high heat until sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil and cook until dark caramel (3-4 minutes). Add vinegar (be careful, hot caramel will spit) and stir to combine well.

3 Place each beetroot in the centre of a square of foil large enough to enclose completely, spoon equal quantities of caramel mixture over each, then carefully wrap to seal. Place on a bed of rock salt in a roasting pan and roast until tender when pierced with a skewer (30-40 minutes). When cool enough to handle, peel and thickly slice.

4 For beetroot vinaigrette, simmer beetroot juice in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until reduced by a third (5-6 minutes). Meanwhile, place raspberries and vinegar in a separate saucepan over medium-high heat, bring to the boil, then add reduced beetroot juice and purée with a stick blender or in a small food processor and set aside to cool. Pass through a fine sieve, add oil and season to taste.>



Crumpets

5 Toss beetroot slices with some of the beetroot vinaigrette in a bowl, arrange on a platter, drizzle with extra vinaigrette, then scatter with almonds. Drain a handful of pickled onion, separate into petals, then scatter over beetroot, and top with sliced Chioggia beetroot and crumbled shankleesh and dill. Season to taste and serve.

Wine suggestion 2013 Lark Hill Pinot Noir.

Crumpets

"These crumpets have been on our menu from day one," says McConnell. "The real hero of the dish here is our own honey from our three hives with access to native blossoms and blackberry. Our beekeeper, Dermot Asls Sha'Non, extracts the honey using a centrifuge, and only lightly filters it, to retain the wild flavour."

Prep time 15 mins, cook 20 mins (plus proving)

Makes 15

- 30 gm caster sugar
- 7 gm (1 sachet) dried yeast
- 50 gm butter, plus extra to serve
- 800 ml milk
- 500 gm (3 ½ cups) plain flour
- 3 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- Good butter and raw honey, to serve

1 Stir sugar, yeast and 30ml warm water in a bowl to dissolve and set aside in a warm area until foamy (10-15 minutes). Melt butter in 200ml milk in a saucepan over medium heat, remove from heat and add remaining milk, then yeast mixture.

2 Sift flour and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl, form a well in the centre, and whisk in milk mixture to just combine. Stand at room temperature until doubled in size (30 minutes) or cover with plastic wrap and prove overnight in the refrigerator.

3 Warm a non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat and butter the inside of some egg rings. Place rings in the pan, half-fill with batter and cook until bases are golden, holes appear on the surface and mixture sets (5-6 minutes). Serve hot with good butter and raw honey.

Rhubarb, strawberry and pink peppercorn crumble with chamomile ice-cream

"This is pretty much your mum's old-fashioned crumble," says McConnell, "but we've added pink peppercorns to give it a delicate and floral heat."

Prep time 40 mins, cook 1 hr (plus chilling, freezing)

Serves 8

- 750 gm rhubarb, diced
- 90 gm honey
- 60 gm brown sugar
- Juice and finely grated rind of 3 lemons
- 750 gm strawberries (about 3 punnets), hulled and halved
- 375 gm caster sugar
- 3 tbsp pink peppercorns, crushed



Chamomile ice-cream

- 500 ml (2 cups) milk
- 200 ml pouring cream
- 20 gm (1 cup) loose-leaf chamomile tea
- 6 egg yolks
- 175 gm caster sugar

Crumble

- 150 gm softened butter
- 150 gm (1 cup) plain flour
- 150 gm almond meal
- 150 gm (¾ cup) brown sugar
- 75 gm rolled oats

1 For chamomile ice-cream, bring milk, cream and chamomile tea to a simmer in a saucepan over medium heat. Remove from heat and stand to infuse (1 hour). Whisk yolks and sugar in a bowl until pale (4-5 minutes), strain milk mixture over, pressing on solids, and whisk to combine. Return to a clean pan and stir over very low heat until mixture thickly coats the back of a spoon or reaches 87C on a thermometer (5-6 minutes) Transfer to a bowl, whisk occasionally until cool, then chill. Churn in an ice-cream machine and freeze. Makes about 1 litre.

2 Place rhubarb, honey, brown sugar and lemon juice and rind in a saucepan over medium heat, bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender (8-10 minutes). In a separate pan, stir strawberries and sugar over medium heat until broken down (8-10 minutes), add to rhubarb with 1 tsp sea salt and set aside.

3 For crumble, beat butter and flour in an electric mixer to combine, then add almond meal, sugar and oats and mix to combine.

4 Preheat oven to 180C. Spoon rhubarb and strawberry compote into 8 shallow individual ovenproof dishes or a 1.2-litre baking dish, scatter with peppercorns, and top with crumble. Bake until golden and bubbling (15-20 minutes for individual, 25-30 minutes for large). Serve with chamomile ice-cream.

Wine suggestion 2013 Lerida Estate Botrytis Pinot Gris. ●



Rhubarb, strawberry and
pink peppercorn crumble
with chamomile ice-cream

RAVIOLI Robert Gordon bowls from Chef and the Cook. Medium nesting bowl (with salad) from Koskela. **PIE** Moscow Mule copper cup and Ambai Santoku knife by Koizumi Makoto both from Ginkgo Leaf. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.



Pumpkin ravioli
with sage (RECIPE P106)

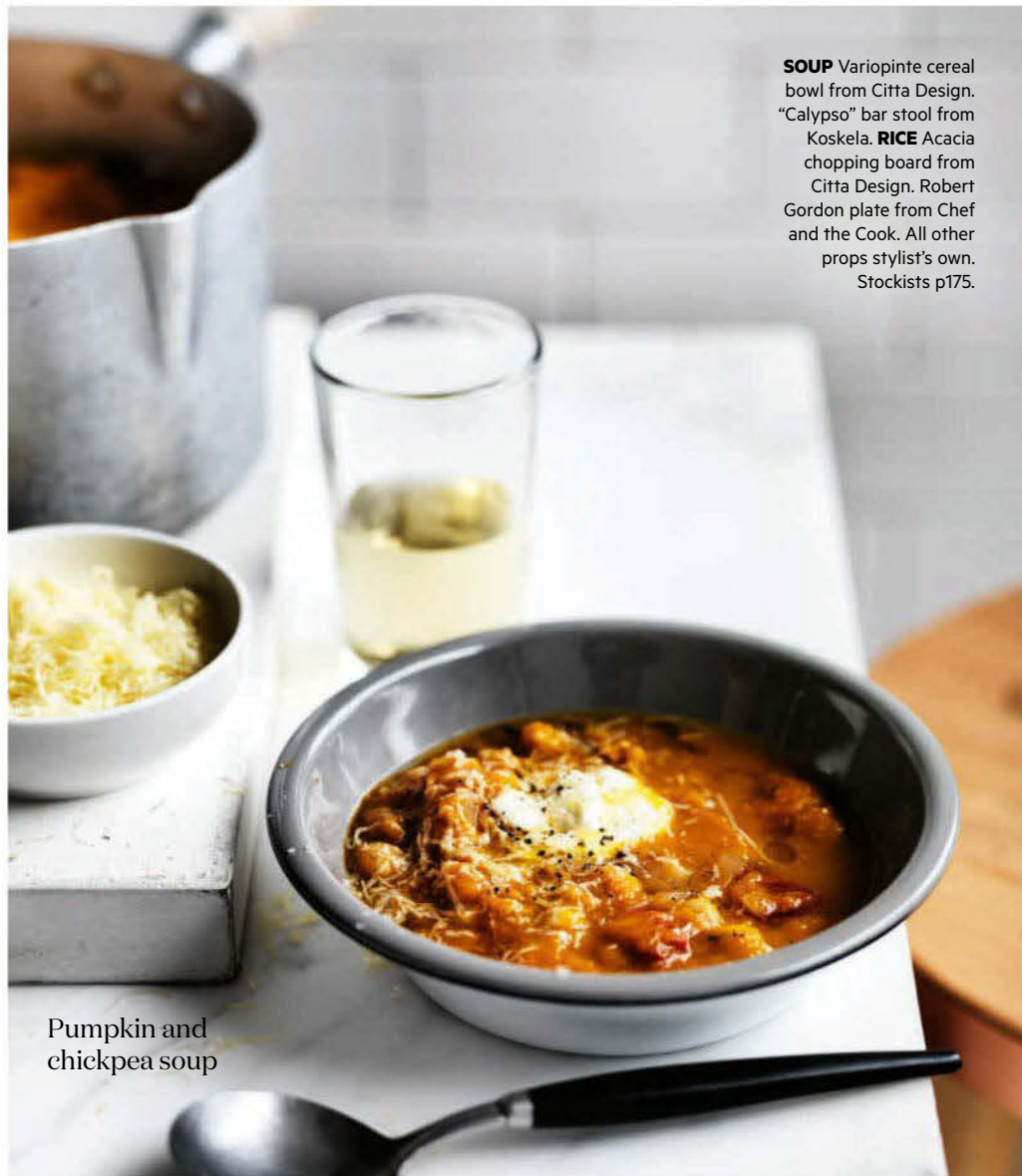
SMASHING *PUMPKINS*

There's more to pumpkin than soup – it's right at home in sage-infused pasta parcels, fragrant rice and a savoury olive loaf (and, yes, a pretty great soup as well).

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING **LISA FEATHERBY** PHOTOGRAPHY **WILLIAM MEPPEN**
STYLING **LYNSEY FRYERS-HEDRICK** DRINK SUGGESTIONS **MAX ALLEN**

Pumpkin, Gorgonzola and
rosemary pie (RECIPE P109)





SOUP Variopinte cereal bowl from Citta Design. "Calypso" bar stool from Koskela. **RICE** Acacia chopping board from Citta Design. Robert Gordon plate from Chef and the Cook. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Pumpkin and chickpea soup

Pumpkin and chickpea soup

Pumpkin soup is a winter classic. In this version we roast the pumpkin first to draw out the sweetness and add depth of flavour. Kent pumpkin, also known as Jap, has a deep orange colour, giving a vibrant result, while parmesan and chickpeas add texture and seasoning. Start this recipe a day ahead to soak the chickpeas.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 1 hr 30 mins

Serves 6

- 1.2 kg peeled Kent (Jap) pumpkin, cut into 4cm cubes
 - 4 red birdseye chillies, coarsely chopped
 - 2 tbsp oregano
 - 60 ml (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
 - 250 gm dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in plenty of cold water
 - 6 golden shallots, finely chopped
 - 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
 - 1 litre (4 cups) chicken or vegetable stock
- Finely grated parmesan and crème fraîche, to serve

1 Preheat oven to 200C. Combine pumpkin, chillies and oregano in a large roasting pan. Drizzle with a third of the oil, season to taste, toss to coat and roast, turning occasionally, until pumpkin is very tender and caramelised (1-1½ hours).

2 Meanwhile, drain chickpeas and place in a large saucepan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil,

then simmer uncovered over medium heat until chickpeas are very tender (45-55 minutes). Drain, reserving 1 litre cooking liquid, and set aside.

3 Heat remaining oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, add shallots and garlic, and sauté over low heat until tender (12-15 minutes). Add stock and bring to the boil, then add pumpkin and chickpeas, and coarsely crush with a spoon. Add reserved chickpea liquid to achieve a chunky soup consistency, season to taste and serve topped with parmesan, crème fraîche and black pepper.

Wine suggestion A rich oloroso Sherry.

Fragrant pumpkin rice with quail

Quail and pumpkin pair well in this Middle Eastern-style dish – they both have a little sweetness, and the gaminess of the quail works well with the earthiness of Kent pumpkin.

Prep time 25 mins, cook 25 mins (plus resting)

Serves 6

- 30 gm mixed slivered almonds and pistachios
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 300 gm peeled Kent (Jap) pumpkin, cut into 1.5cm dice
- 3 golden shallots, diced
- ½ leek (white part only), finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 6 cardamom pods, bruised
- 2 cinnamon quills

- Large pinch of saffron threads
- 300 gm (1½ cups) long-grain rice
- 2 tbsp barberries (see note)
- 10 gm ginger, finely grated
- 6 fresh curry leaves
- 750 ml (3 cups) chicken stock
- 1 tbsp butter
- 320 gm quail breast fillets (about 14; see note)
- Coriander and yoghurt (optional), to serve

1 Preheat oven to 200C. Roast almonds and pistachios on a baking tray, shaking occasionally, until golden (3-4 minutes). Set aside.

2 Heat ghee in a casserole or deep frying pan over high heat, add pumpkin, shallot, leek, garlic and spices, and sauté until softened (4-6 minutes). Stir in rice, barberries, ginger and curry leaves, add stock to cover by 2cm (add a little water if necessary), stir once and bring to a simmer. Cover tightly with foil, then transfer to oven and bake until rice has absorbed liquid (12-14 minutes). Cover with a tea towel and set aside to steam for 5 minutes, then arrange on a serving platter.

3 Reduce oven to 100C. Heat half the butter in a large frying pan over high heat, add half the quail skin-side down and fry until golden brown (1½ minutes), then turn and cook to your liking (30 seconds for medium rare). Keep warm in oven and repeat with remaining butter and quail. Arrange on rice, scatter with nuts and coriander, and serve with yoghurt.

Note Barberries, tart dried red berries, are available from select delicatessens and Middle Eastern grocers, and online at pariyafood.com. We used Game Farm quail breast fillets, which are available in 320gm packets of 14 fillets from select supermarkets, butchers and independent grocers. If they're unavailable, substitute 6 whole quail and increase the cooking time by a few minutes to cook the legs.

Wine suggestion Full-bodied, creamy white, such as viognier.

Pumpkin ravioli with sage

Ravioli may be time-consuming to make, but they can be made ahead and stored wrapped in plastic wrap between layers of baking paper in the fridge, ready for the pot; just make sure you dust them with semolina to keep them dry and prevent them from sticking. We've used butternut here – true to its name, it's rich and creamy and will yield the perfect texture for this luxe dish.

Prep time 40 mins, cook 40 mins (plus resting)

Serves 6-8 (pictured p104)

- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 50 gm butter, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 600 gm peeled butternut pumpkin, diced
- 60 ml dry white wine
- 1 tsp thyme
- 4-5 fine gratings of nutmeg
- 60 gm parmesan or pecorino, finely grated, plus extra to serve
- Eggwash, for brushing (see cook's notes p176)>




Fragrant pumpkin
rice with quail



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RECIPES ONLINE**

For more inspiration
to transform the humble
pumpkin, we've got everything
from soups to sweets online:
gourmettraveller.com.au



Fried pumpkin with
yoghurt-herb dressing
and crisp onion

**HOT
TIP**

The water content in pumpkins varies a lot, which affects the result when they're roasted. A pumpkin with bright-coloured flesh that weeps when cut will have good flavour, but it may become mushy when cooked. We find butternut to be the most consistent pumpkin for roasting.

FRIED PUMPKIN White Series porcelain dinner plate from Koskela. **TEXT** PAGE Astro tumblers in black and Holm pourer both from Country Road. Copper ladle from Koskela. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Egg pasta dough

- 250 gm (1½ cup) "00" flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- Sage brown butter**
- 200 gm butter, chopped
- 1 cup (loosely packed) sage leaves

1 For egg pasta dough, pulse flour and 1 tsp salt in a food processor to combine. Add eggs, yolk and olive oil, and process until dough comes together. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead to a smooth dough, dusting with extra flour if a little sticky. Wrap in plastic wrap and set aside for 1 hour to rest.

2 Sauté onion in oil and half the butter in a wide shallow saucepan over medium heat until onion is tender and starting to caramelize (10-15 minutes). Add garlic, stir until fragrant (1 minute), then remove mixture from pan and set aside. Add remaining butter and pumpkin to pan, and cook uncovered until just tender (8-10 minutes). Add wine and 100ml water, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until liquid has evaporated and pumpkin is very tender (5-8 minutes). Add thyme and nutmeg, return onion and garlic to pan, then set aside to cool (30 minutes). Add parmesan, season to taste and stir to combine.

3 Divide pasta dough into 6 pieces and, working with a piece at a time, flatten then roll through a pasta machine, starting on the widest setting and dusting with flour as necessary. Fold in half and repeat until pasta is smooth and silky, then continue rolling and folding, reducing the settings a notch each time, until dough 3mm thick. Cut out 8cm rounds and place on a tray lined with baking paper, separating each layer with a sheet of baking paper and covering with a damp tea towel until all the dough is rolled and cut.

4 Working in batches, place pasta rounds in a row and spoon 1 tsp pumpkin filling onto the centre of each. Brush edges with eggwash, then place another round on top. Starting closely around filling, press outwards to seal completely, then trim to a 7cm round with cutter. Place on a tray lined with baking paper, separating each layer with more baking paper, and refrigerate.

5 For sage butter, melt butter in a saucepan until foaming and nut brown (1-2 minutes). Add sage, remove from heat and stir gently until crisp (10 seconds). Transfer to a bowl.

6 Cook ravioli in batches in a large saucepan of boiling salted water until al dente (2-4 minutes). Transfer with a slotted spoon to warm bowls. Drizzle with sage brown butter, scatter with parmesan or pecorino and serve immediately.

Wine suggestion Rich Italian white wine, such as *falanghina*.

Fried pumpkin with yoghurt-herb dressing and crisp onion

This light salad works well as a side with roast meat such as chicken, or just on its own with crusty bread.

Prep time 15 mins, cook 15 mins

Serves 4

- Vegetable oil, for shallow-frying
- 4 golden shallots, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 kg peeled butternut pumpkin, cut into 3cm dice
- 1 tsp each ground chilli, ground cumin and ground coriander
- Sumac and crusty bread, to serve
- Tamari pepitas**
- 60 gm pepitas
- 3 tsp tamari
- 15 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- Yoghurt-herb dressing**
- 200 ml Greek-style yoghurt, at room temperature
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tbsp each thinly sliced mint and coarsely chopped dill, plus extra to serve
- ½ tsp ground chilli

1 For tamari pepitas, preheat oven to 180C. Toss pepitas in a roasting pan with tamari and butter, season to taste, then roast, turning occasionally, until golden brown (4-7 minutes). Set aside to cool.

2 Reduce over to 140C. Heat 5cm oil in a deep saucepan over high heat until hot. Add shallots and fry, stirring continuously, until golden and crisp (3-5 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

3 Strain oil, return to pan and top up to a depth of 5cm. Toss pumpkin and spices in a bowl to coat, season to taste and shallow-fry in batches, turning occasionally, until pumpkin is tender and caramelized (4-6 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon, drain on paper towels, then transfer to a baking tray and keep warm in oven.

4 For yoghurt-herb dressing, mix ingredients in a bowl and season to taste.

5 To serve, toss half the pumpkin in a bowl with yoghurt-herb dressing to coat, add remaining pumpkin and fold to just combine. Scatter with sumac, fried shallots, tamari pepitas and extra herbs, and serve with crusty bread.

Wine suggestion Perfumed white wine, such as *marsanne*.

Pumpkin, Gorgonzola and rosemary pie

For this rich pie, we've opted for a buttery sour cream pastry base, which gives an extra piquant, savoury hit, and topped it with butter puff pastry for a flaky finish. Use any pumpkin you like, Kent (Jap) will give a deeper colour and flavour, and butternut a softer result. Watch the amount of liquid that comes from the pumpkin when roasting and, if needed, drain the pumpkin well before assembling the pie.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 1 hr (plus cooling)

Serves 8 (pictured p105)

- 900 gm peeled Kent (Jap) pumpkin (about a third large), cut into 4cm cubes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp pine nuts
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp coarsely chopped rosemary
- 80 gm Gorgonzola dolcelatte
- 50 gm finely grated parmesan
- 1 egg, lightly beaten, for eggwash (see cook's notes p176)
- 375 gm sheet butter puff pastry (see note)
- Mesclun leaves, dressed with white wine vinaigrette
- Crème fraîche shortcrust pastry**
- 250 gm (1½ cup) plain flour
- 100 gm unsalted butter, chilled
- 75 gm sour cream

1 Preheat oven to 250C. Place pumpkin in a shallow roasting pan, drizzle with half the oil, season to taste, toss to coat and roast until pumpkin starts to caramelize at the edges and you can insert a knife with just a little resistance (17-20 minutes; be careful not to overcook). Transfer to a colander placed over a bowl and set aside to drain and cool (40-50 minutes). Coarsely break up a third of the pumpkin in a bowl and refrigerate until chilled (1 hour).

2 Meanwhile, for crème fraîche shortcrust pastry, process flour and butter in a food processor to >



fine crumbs, add sour cream and pulse to combine. Turn out, pat into a disc, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes to rest.

3 Heat remaining olive oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, add onion and sauté until tender and caramelised (8-9 minutes). Add pine nuts and garlic, and sauté, stirring occasionally, until golden (2-3 minutes). Add rosemary, stir until fragrant and rosemary starts to lose its bright colour (1 minute), then season to taste and transfer to a bowl to cool (20 minutes). Add pumpkin, stir to combine, then stir in cheeses and season to taste.

4 Preheat oven to 250C and line a baking tray with baking paper. Roll shortcrust pastry to a 30cm round and refrigerate 15 minutes to rest. Place on prepared tray, spread on pumpkin mixture, leaving a 2cm border, then brush border with eggwash. Roll out puff pastry to 4mm thick and place on top, pressing around pumpkin filling gently to seal. Trim edges to form a neat round and pinch edges to seal. Score a criss-cross pattern on top, brush with eggwash, scatter with sea salt flakes and bake until pastry is puffed and starting to turn golden (10 minutes). Reduce oven to 180C and cook until pastry is golden and crisp (25-30 minutes). Set pie aside to rest and cool briefly (5 minutes), then serve with mesclun salad.

Note We prefer to use Carême butter puff pastry, which comes in 375gm sheets.

Wine suggestion Fruity sparkling red lambrusco.

Pumpkin rösti with poached egg, and mint, feta and avocado salad

This rösti is equally good for breakfast or lunch with a light salad added for zing. Kent (Jap) pumpkin contains a good amount of starch, which is perfect for holding the rösti together as it cooks.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 15 mins

Makes 4

- 120 gm peeled Kent pumpkin, coarsely grated
- 120 gm Desiree potatoes (about 1 large), peeled, coarsely grated
- 1 Spanish onion, coarsely grated
- 2 tbsp finely chopped thyme
- 160 ml olive oil
- 4 eggs
- Lemon wedges, to serve
- Mint, feta and avocado salad**
- 2 cups (firmly packed) flat-leaf parsley
- 1 cup (firmly packed) mint, torn
- 100 gm Persian feta, crumbled
- 1 avocado, cut into dice
- ½ Spanish onion, thinly sliced
- 60 ml (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon

1 Preheat oven to 190C and line a baking tray with baking paper. Combine pumpkin, potato, onion and thyme in a large bowl and season to taste.

2 Heat 40ml oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, add a quarter of the pumpkin mixture, press down to 1cm thick and cook, turning once, until golden brown (2-3 minutes each side). Transfer to prepared tray and place in oven until cooked

through (5 minutes). Repeat three times with remaining pumpkin mixture.

3 Poach eggs in a saucepan of simmering water until soft-poached (3 minutes).

4 Combine salad ingredients in a bowl, season to taste and serve with rösti topped with a poached egg and lemon wedges.

Wine suggestion Brunch-time bubbly.

Pumpkin, fennel and olive ring loaf

Serve this warm from the oven as on a cold winter's day for a delicious teatime snack. You can use any pumpkin you like here, but we've chosen butternut because it caramelises well when roasting, making for extra flavour.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 15 mins (plus cooling, proving)

Serves 6-8

- 250 gm peeled Kent (Jap) pumpkin cut into 2cm dice
- 2 tsp grapeseed oil
- 1 tsp fennel seeds, plus extra to garnish
- 330 gm bread flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- ¾ tsp dried yeast
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for brushing
- 150 gm coarsely chopped pitted Sicilian green olives
- Butter, to serve

1 Heat a large frying pan over high heat.

Toss pumpkin in a bowl with grapeseed oil to coat, then transfer to hot pan and fry, stirring occasionally, until tender and caramelised (5-7 minutes). Add fennel seeds and stir until fragrant (1-2 minutes). Season to taste and set aside to cool (15-20 minutes).

2 Meanwhile, combine flour, sugar and yeast in an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook and mix to just combine. Add olive oil, 250ml water and ½ tsp salt, mix until a soft dough forms, then set aside covered until doubled in size (30 minutes).

3 Fold pumpkin and olives loosely through dough with your hands, knocking it back at the same time, then turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and roll to a rough 45cm long cylinder. Transfer to a sheet of baking paper, bring ends together, overlapping a little, and press to seal. Set aside uncovered until doubled in size (about 1 hour).

4 Preheat oven to 250C. Brush loaf lightly with olive oil and scatter with fennel seeds. Spray oven with water before placing bread in. Bake for 15 minutes, then reduce heat to 180C and bake, turning tray once, until golden and crusty (10-15 minutes). Cool briefly on a wire rack (5 minutes), then serve with butter. This loaf is best eaten on the day it's made.

Drink suggestion Cloudy wheat beer. ●



RING LOAF Acacia chopping board from Citta Design. Copper and steel knife from Collector Store. **RÖSTI** Scape dinner plate from West Elm. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Pumpkin, fennel and olive ring loaf






MORE FRIED CHICKEN ONLINE

Jump online for our collection of finger-lickin' favourite recipes, from Nashville hot chicken to Korean fried chicken, and watch Greg Llewellyn from Hartsyard make perfect fried chicken: gourmettraveller.com.au



Quick-fire fried chicken (RECIPE P115)



Butter lettuce and
dandelion salad with hot
bacon dressing (RECIPE P118)

made in America

Hartsyard hot sauce. The fried chicken. Yes, you heard right. Sydney's go-to for all things American gives up the goods on its most finger-lickin' dishes in a new cookbook, *Fried Chicken and Friends*. We've got the highlights right here.

RECIPES GREGORY LLEWELLYN WORDS NAOMI HART PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN LAURIE STYLING MATT PAGE



NAOMI HART AND
GREGORY LLEWELLYN

Gregory has been cooking since he was 15, when he skateboarded to the only restaurant close enough to his home in rural Johnson, upstate New York. As a young adult, he dabbled briefly in snowboarding, but he soon realised he preferred the adrenaline of a bustling restaurant mid-service on a Saturday night, a rail full of tickets and 15 plates on the pass.

Me? I've been a nun, a cow, a duckling, a whore, a servant, a princess and a dancing plate. That is to say, I used to perform in musical theatre and we met when I was in NYC living the dream. Well, maybe not quite the dream. I was very happy, but from memory I was also very poor and pretty tired. But then we opened a restaurant just after we'd had a baby and I quickly recalibrated my thoughts on poverty and fatigue.

It's not a particularly original tale. We met at a restaurant where I was the hostess and he was the chef. We dated in secret and married 18 months later at a converted foundry in Queens. I always knew he wanted his own restaurant and I always said I'd help him open it. He does back of house and I do front. And so it follows with this book. He led the charge on the recipes and I filled in the rest. But there's the rub.

He likes fried chicken; I don't. He likes potato bake; I like salad. He likes beer; I like dessert. It was just like the stage. Artistic differences already. So we decided to combine our likes and invite you all to one big Hartsyard fried-chicken dinner party.

Where Gregory's from, fried chicken speaks of traditions and rituals. But it's not just a dish for special events. Fried chicken *makes* a special event – that's the point. It's humble and egalitarian: everyone is equal when you're eating with your fingers. No pomp and circumstance here. And definitely no tablecloths. This is a party for all your favourite people, the ones with whom there's no need for pretence. Invite them over, make them a drink and tell them to get involved.

Most of the recipes are for a party of six; if you have more friends than we do, just make double. *Hartsyard*, 33 Enmore Rd, Newtown, NSW, (02) 8068 1473, hartsyard.com.au



Hartsyard hot sauce

Hartsyard hot sauce

"That's all it is?" asked Naomi, when she read the ingredients list for this sauce. "With all the compliments it gets, I half-expected it to contain essence of unicorn," writes Llewellyn. "Without trying to sound like wankers, this is the item on the Hartsyard menu that receives the most praise." Begin this recipe two days ahead. This recipe makes 1.2 litres of sauce; unless you're having a party, we recommend you halve or quarter it.

Makes about 1.2 litres

- 200 gm long red fresno chillies or long red chillies (see note)
- 200 gm onions, halved
- 1 litre (4 cups) white vinegar
- 100 gm sea salt
- 100 gm garlic cloves (about 20)
- 250 gm oak food-grade woodchips (never use chunks or pellets)
- 100 gm unsalted butter

1 On a barbecue with a lid, place half the chillies and half the onions, leaving enough space to house a black cast-iron pan. Place a cast-iron pan on the stovetop until ridiculously hot (around 5 minutes on full heat).

2 Meanwhile, in a 3-litre stockpot, combine the remaining chillies and onions, vinegar, salt and garlic. Bring to a slow simmer, never allowing the mixture to boil.

3 When the cast-iron pan is at smelting temperature, cover the bottom with at least 1cm of oak chips and leave until the chips start to smoulder and smoke (almost instantaneous) – they should never ignite. Move the pan to the barbecue very carefully, then close the barbecue lid and leave to smoke. If the chips are still smoking after a minimum of 20 minutes, let them

go until finished; if they're done, place the smoked vegetables in the stockpot (which by now should have been bubbling away for 30 minutes). Simmer for a further 30 minutes, ensuring the mixture never boils. After 1 hour of total cooking, remove the stockpot from the heat. Stir in butter, then wrap the top of the hot stockpot with plastic wrap to form a seal. Leave at room temperature for 48 hours.

4 After 2 days, blend chilli mixture until smooth enough to strain through a colander. This removes large chunks, leaving a fine pulp. Transfer to sterile bottles or airtight containers and refrigerate; the sauce will easily keep for a week or two.

Note Hartsyard uses fresno chillies, which are similar to jalapeños; due to limited availability we used long red chillies instead.

Quick-fire fried chicken

"So, you don't have the time or energy to spend three days preparing your fried chicken? What's wrong with you?" says Llewellyn. "Just kidding. Here's a quick version of the Hartsyard process. You can't fast-track everything, though. You still need to allow at least two hours for brining, and another two hours for marinating."

Serves 4 (pictured p112)

- 2 tbsps granulated sea salt
- 1.4 kg chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- 500 gm lard or beef suet
- Marinade**
- 250 ml (1 cup) Hartsyard hot sauce (see recipe opposite)
- 250 ml (1 cup) buttermilk
- Crumbing mix**
- 300 gm (2 cups) self-raising flour
- 3 tbsps Old Bay Seasoning (see note)
- 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp sweet paprika
- 1 tbsp mustard powder
- 2 tsp dried thyme

1 Bring 1 litre water to the simmer in a 2-litre stockpot. Add salt and stir until dissolved. Remove from heat and pour into a non-reactive container (see cook's notes p176). Cool to room temperature, then refrigerate until completely cold. Submerge chicken pieces in brine, cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 4 hours.

2 For marinade, in a large bowl, combine hot sauce and buttermilk. Remove chicken from brine and pat dry thoroughly with paper towels. Place chicken in marinade and toss until thoroughly coated. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.

3 For crumbing mix, mix all ingredients in a large bowl until thoroughly combined. Have the mixture at hand when you're ready to fry up the chicken.

4 In a cast-iron frying pan large enough to fit the chicken pieces comfortably, melt the lard or suet over medium-low heat. When it starts to shimmer, increase the heat to medium. Remove chicken from marinade, then roll in the crumbing mix to coat. Place back in the marinade, then crumbing mix again, then slowly place the chicken in the lard a piece at a time – they should start sizzling immediately. Keeping a close eye on the pan and

the browning, keep frying until golden on one side. Turn chicken over and keep frying until a crust has formed and the colour is uniform. The whole frying process should take about 12 minutes. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

Note "Old Bay Seasoning is an American herb and spice mix, primarily used in Southern US cuisine," says Llewellyn. "I think McCormick must put fairy dust in theirs – it's that good!" It's available from usafoods.com.au.

Barbecue pit beans

"The key to good barbecue pit beans is stuffing as much fat and pork as you possibly can into each dried bean," says Llewellyn. "Check your fridge and throw any leftover barbecued meat into the pot as well, especially the burnt ends of brisket, then simmer for a good long time. Regular maple syrup will do just fine here – or you can smoke it, as we do (see recipe p118). The beans will need to soak overnight, and the pork belly needs to cure in a spice mix overnight, so start preparing these the day before." This dish is quite sweet. We recommend reducing the amount of sugar if you prefer a more savoury result.

Serves 6

- 500 gm dried white beans
- 125 gm lard
- 250 gm thick-cut smoked bacon, diced

- 24 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 onions, diced
- 2 tbsps onion powder
- 2 tbsps garlic powder
- 2 tbsps smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp chilli flakes
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp dried chipotle chilli
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 250 gm dark brown sugar
- 1.5 litres (6 cups) pork or chicken stock
- 500 ml (2 cups) tomato sauce
- 200 ml maple syrup
- 125 ml (½ cup) apple cider vinegar
- 400 gm canned chopped Roma tomatoes
- Pork belly**
- 250 gm pork belly, skin on
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 bay leaf, fresh or dried
- Finely grated rind of 1 lemon
- Olive oil or vegetable oil, for drizzling

1 Place beans in a container that holds at least 2 litres. Pour in plenty of lukewarm water, then leave to rehydrate and soften for at least 12 hours.>



Barbecue pit beans



Dirty rice

2 For pork belly, season it liberally with sea salt. Pound the garlic, peppercorns, coriander seeds, bay leaf and lemon rind with a mortar and pestle, then rub thoroughly all over the pork belly. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

3 Next day, preheat oven to 150C. Rinse pork, then place in a roasting pan with a splash of oil and roast for 2 hours. Leave to cool, cut into bite-sized chunks and set aside.

4 Meanwhile, heat lard in a large saucepan. Add bacon and cook over medium heat until slightly brown. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until golden. Once the mixture is golden brown delicious, add onion and cook until golden brown (another 5-10 minutes). Now stir in all spices and cook until fragrant (2-3 minutes). Stir until all the lumps are dispersed, then add sugar and stir until dissolved. Add stock, tomato sauce, maple syrup, vinegar and tomato. Bring to a simmer and season to taste.

5 Drain beans and give them a quick rinse. Add to the sauce mixture along with the pork belly. Slowly simmer until the beans are soft (at least 2 hours; start checking after about 1½ hours). These beans are fantastic served with cornbread, smoked lamb ribs, fried chicken (see recipe p115), or with toast for breakfast.

Dirty rice

"The polite people call this 'Southern fried rice,'" says Llewellyn. "It gets its other name from its 'dirty' colour, which comes from the ground chicken livers. This is one of those dishes for which every Southern home has its own version. The one thing that should be standard is that the cooked rice should be at least a day old so it absorbs more flavours." Begin this recipe a day ahead to prepare the cooked rice.

Serves 6

- 4 fresh chicken livers, trimmed of any sinew
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 150 gm minced pork
- 375 ml (1½ cups) chicken stock
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 2 celery stalks, finely diced
- 8 garlic cloves, crushed
- ½ tsp Piment d'Espelette (see note) or chilli powder, plus extra to serve
- 650 gm (3½ cups) day-old cooked medium-grain or long-grain white or brown rice (not freshly cooked)
- 1 long red fresno chilli or long red chilli (see note), stem removed and thinly sliced, seeds and all
- 4 spring onions, thinly sliced, including the green bits

1 Purée livers in a bowl with a hand-held blender.
2 Heat oil in a flameproof casserole over medium heat to just before smoking point (oil should be shimmering, with no bubbles; 200C). Add pork and puréed livers and stir until combined. Continue to cook until the meat begins to brown. Be patient: do not constantly stir – the more brown the meat is, the more flavourful it will be. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and continue cooking until the mixture is

thoroughly browned and granular in texture. Pour in half the stock, then continue cooking until it has evaporated. Add onion, celery, garlic and piment d'Espelette and stir constantly over medium-high heat until the vegetables begin to caramelise (about 10 minutes). Add rice and remaining stock, then cover and simmer until the liquid has evaporated (4-5 minutes). Stir the rice, from bottom to top, adding chilli and spring onion; these should remain fresh and crunchy. Season to taste; add extra piment d'Espelette if desired. Turn out into a bowl and devour.

Note Piment d'Espelette, a type of French dried, flaked chilli, is available from herbies.com.au. Hartsyard uses fresno chillies, which are similar to jalapeños; due to availability we used long red chillies instead.

Dirty chicken gravy

"Dirty like the colour of mud, and delicious like the greatest gravy you've ever tasted, this sensational sauce has a super-chickeny flavour and just begs to be served with mashed potato," says Llewellyn.

Serves 6

- 6 chicken carcasses
- 2 heads of garlic, halved
- 4 onions, halved
- 2 carrots, halved

- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 litres (8 cups) salt-reduced chicken stock
- 12 thyme sprigs
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- Lemon juice, to taste
- 2 dashes of Hartsyard hot sauce (see recipe p114)
- 60 gm roasted chicken fat, melted (see note)
- Roux
- 125 gm lard
- 75 gm (½ cup) plain flour

1 Preheat oven to 175C. Chop each chicken carcass into 4 or 5 bits and set half aside. Set half the garlic, onion, carrot and celery aside. Put the remaining chicken bones and vegetables in a large roasting pan. Roast until the bones are a deep, rich brown (about 1½ hours). Transfer the roasted bones, vegetables and all the fat from the pan to a stockpot. Add stock, half the thyme and half the bay leaves. Bring to a simmer, then cook, uncovered, over low heat for 2 hours, periodically skimming the impurities from the surface. Strain (discard solids).

2 Meanwhile, repeat the roasting process with reserved chicken bones and vegetables. Transfer roasted bones, vegetables and all the fat into a medium stockpot. Add the strained cooking liquid from the previous stock, and the remaining thyme>



Dirty chicken gravy

and bay leaves. Simmer, uncovered, over low heat for 2 hours, periodically skimming the impurities from the surface. This is your gravy.

3 When the gravy is nearly ready, make your roux. Melt lard in a small saucepan. Whisk in flour, then cook over low heat until the flour starts to turn golden brown (about 15 minutes). Cook for a further 5 minutes; the flour will become fragrant.

4 Strain gravy into a smaller stockpot (discard solids). Add roux (it will bind the fats and liquids in the gravy) and cook over medium heat until reduced by half (about 500ml). The mixture should be a rich brown colour and will thicken as it boils; it should easily coat the back of a spoon. Strain into a bowl and season with lots of freshly ground black pepper, a squeeze of lemon juice and hot sauce. Slowly whisk in the chicken fat, and you're ready to serve.

Note For chicken fat, ask your butcher for 500gm chicken skin, thoroughly rinse and dry the skin and place in a stockpot with 5 litres water. Bring to the boil over medium-high heat, then cook, uncovered, for about 30 minutes until the water has evaporated. The water will break down the skin, the fat will come out of the skin and rise to the surface; the skin will start to brown. Reduce the heat to medium-low and, using a metal spatula, scrape the skin off the base of the pot. Continue to render the skin in its own fat until it becomes golden brown; the fat will remain a liquid throughout. Drain the skin on paper towels; it will become crisp as it cools. Turn off the heat and leave the fat to cool for about 15 minutes. Strain through a fine mesh strainer. Makes about 250gm.

Butter lettuce and dandelion salad with hot bacon dressing

"Butter lettuce is the easiest lettuce to grow," says Llewellyn. "The leaves are beautifully soft and tender, just begging to be coated with a slick of warm bacon fat." This recipe makes a lot of dressing. We suggest you quarter the ingredients.

Serves 6 (pictured p113)

- 1 butter lettuce, core removed, leaves separated
- 150 gm (1 bunch) dandelion greens, leaves separated, stems trimmed (see note)
- 50 gm (1 bunch) sorrel, small leaves only, stems trimmed
- 10 watercress sprigs
- Hot bacon dressing**
- 60 gm pork fat (see note)
- 150 gm smoked bacon, diced
- 6 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 tsp chilli flakes
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 4 golden shallots, thinly sliced
- 250 ml (1 cup) Champagne vinegar
- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 500 ml (2 cups) pouring cream
- 4 thyme sprigs
- Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon

1 For bacon dressing, heat pork fat in a saucepan over medium-high heat until smoking. Add bacon and cook until half crisp, darker in colour and the

fat has released into the pan (about 5 minutes).

Add garlic, chilli flakes and bay leaf and toast until the mixture smells really fragrant and the garlic starts to turn golden brown (about 3 minutes). Add shallot and cook until translucent (about 4 minutes). Stir in vinegar and sugar and cook for 4-5 minutes over medium heat, scraping the base of the pan to release anything that's stuck. Season generously with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add cream and bring to the boil, then remove from heat. Add thyme, steep for 15 minutes, then discard thyme.

2 Meanwhile, wash and thoroughly dry all the greens and combine in a mixing bowl.

3 Add lemon rind and juice to the dressing. Ladle the hot bacon dressing over the salad. The greens will slightly wilt and the dressing will coat all the leaves. Haphazardly arrange the salad on a serving platter and enjoy straight away.

Note You'll need to order dandelion greens from a greengrocer, or substitute chicory or another bitter leaf. For pork fat, preheat oven to 170C. Put the fat in a roasting pan and roast for about 1 hour. Transfer to a large stockpot and add 5 litres water. Bring to the boil, then cook, uncovered, over medium-high heat for about 30 minutes, until the water has evaporated. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Using a metal spatula, scrape the fat off the bottom of the pot; the fat will remain a liquid throughout the process. Turn off the heat and leave the fat to cool for about 15 minutes. Strain through a fine mesh strainer to remove any impurities. Makes about 250gm pork fat.

Waffles

"Don't let anyone tell you that waffles are just for breakfast," says Llewellyn. "When I was growing up, my favourite meal was when my dad cooked us breakfast for dinner. These waffles are savoury, but if you'd like them sweet, just ditch the cayenne and black pepper, and add some sugar."

Makes 8-12 (depending on size of iron)

- 300 gm (2 cups) plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
- 500 ml (2 cups) buttermilk
- 4 eggs
- 100 gm butter, melted
- Cooking oil, to spray
- Crisp fried bacon, to serve
- Smoked maple syrup (see recipe at right)
- Sifted icing sugar, for scattering

1 Heat a waffle iron and spray with cooking oil. Combine flour and other dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. In another bowl, whisk together buttermilk and eggs, then add to flour mixture and mix until just combined (don't overmix). Fold melted butter in until just combined. Working in batches, pour batter into the waffle iron and cook, following manufacturer's instructions, until golden. Serve piping hot with crisp fried bacon, a good drizzle of smoked maple syrup and a scattering of icing sugar.

Smoked maple syrup

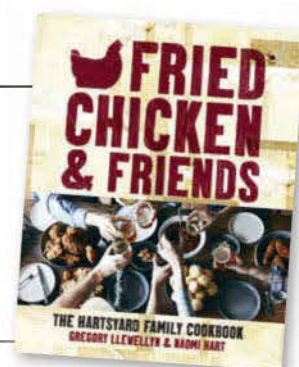
"There was a property near where I grew up in Johnson, New York, that I went to once with my dad," says Llewellyn. "Being the middle child of seven kids, one-on-one occasions like that were rare. I also remember it because it was the first (and only) time I'd sourced my own maple syrup. Or maybe it sticks in my mind because it was the first time I got stitches, when the farm-owner's son covered a rock with snow and pegged it at my head during a snowball fight. We'd tapped the swelling trees the day before, so we'd returned to fill a massive drum with maple water that we then placed on top of a fire and left to simmer away until all that was left was the rich, thick syrup. This can take hours, even days, which is why we were having a snowball fight. I know a lot of you won't bother or may not be able to smoke your maple syrup, but whatever you do, please use the real deal. Don't buy imitation maple syrup because it's cheaper. It's cheap because it's crap. This syrup is brilliant with fried chicken, and drizzled over waffles and vanilla ice-cream."

Makes about 1 litre

- 1 litre (4 cups) Canadian maple syrup
- 250 gm oak food-grade woodchips (never use chunks or pellets)

1 Pour maple syrup into an enamel baking dish (not a metal one, because it will contour). Place the dish on a barbecue with a lid, leaving enough space to house a black cast-iron pan. Place a cast-iron pan on the stovetop until ridiculously hot (roughly 5 minutes on full heat). When the cast-iron pan is at smelting temperature, cover the base with at least 1cm depth of oak chips and leave until the chips start to smoulder and smoke (it's almost instantaneous) – they should never ignite. Move the pan to the barbecue carefully, then close the lid and leave to smoke. If the chips are still smoking after at least 20 minutes, let them go until they have finished. Pour the smoked syrup into a sterile jar and seal well. The syrup will keep indefinitely in a cool dark place. ●

+ Fried Chicken & Friends (\$49.99, hbk) by Gregory Llewellyn and Naomi Hart is published by Murdoch Books. These recipes have been reproduced with minor GT style changes.



Waffles with smoked
maple syrup



TABLE SPREAD “Earth Grey Brick” wallpaper (used throughout) from Shibori. “Dapple” wallpaper and Walter-G linen (used throughout as a table runner) from Emily Ziz Style Studio. Rattan chair from Thonet. Hastoe Windsor chair (at back) from Spence and Lyda. Grey fabric chair from Jordan. Stool with copper legs from Tuckbox. Candleholders and glass (with chutney) from Cult

Design. Vases from Chuchu. Grey ceramic tumbler from Studio Enti. Tom Dixon copper votive from De De Ce. Society linen napkins, carafe and glasses from Ondene. Vanessa Bean bowl (with potatoes) and plate (foreground) from Mud Australia. Plate (background) from Golden Brown Fox. All other props stylist’s own. Stockists p175.

Devendra’s roasted spiced potatoes (RECIPE P126)

Date and preserved lemon chutney (RECIPE P126)

Roast duck with orange, bay, juniper and red wine (RECIPE P122)

winter's TABLE

It's cold out, so gather the clan for a fun-filled dinner party. Brigitte Hafner creates a winter menu inspired by far-flung exotic climes. The table is set, the candles are lit – time to open the wine.



English spinach sautéed with
cumin seeds (RECIPE P126)

BRIOUATS Janetta Kerr-Grant platter from Chinaclay. Plate with spots from Chuchu. Bowl (with yoghurt) from Golden Brown Fox. Rug (used throughout) from Armadillo & Co. Stool with copper legs from Tuckbox. Ceramic cup votive from Studio Enti. Society linen napkins and glass from Ondene. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

Prawn briouats

"I use a hand-rolled pastry by Basak Pastry that I buy from a Middle Eastern grocer for these Moroccan-style parcels," says Brigitte Hafner. "It's thicker than normal filo and comes in round sheets, and has an excellent texture – quite crunchy – when baked or deep-fried. Use filo if you can't find it."

Prep time 30 mins, cook 25 mins (plus draining)

Makes around 18 pastries

- ½ cup coarsely chopped coriander
- ¼ tsp each ground coriander and paprika
- ⅛ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ garlic clove, coarsely chopped
- 450 gm (about 6) uncooked king prawns, peeled, deveined and coarsely chopped
- 1 egg yolk
- 3 sheets yufka pastry (see note)
- 100 ml extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing, plus extra for shallow-frying
- 100 gm butter, melted, for brushing, plus extra for shallow-frying
- Cucumber and mint yoghurt**
- 280 gm (1 cup) Greek-style yoghurt
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, unpeeled, grated and pressed in a sieve to remove excess liquid
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped mint leaves

- 1** For cucumber yoghurt, mix yoghurt and 1 tsp sea salt flakes in a bowl, transfer to a sieve lined with muslin placed over a bowl and refrigerate for 2 hours to drain liquid. Meanwhile, drain cucumber in a sieve, pressing to remove excess liquid, then stir into yoghurt along with mint, season to taste and refrigerate until required.
- 2** Process coriander, spices and garlic in a food processor to just combine, then add prawns and process briefly until prawn meat is coarsely chopped. Add egg yolk and a pinch of salt, and stir to combine.
- 3** Working with a sheet of pastry at a time, brush half of each with a little melted butter mixed with olive oil, then fold over to make a double layer. Cut into 6cm x 20cm strips, then brush each with butter. Place a teaspoonful of prawn mixture close to a short edge of each strip, then fold corner up to form a triangle. Continue folding the strip over, keeping the triangle shape, until enclosed. Brush top with butter to prevent drying and refrigerate (don't cover) on a tray lined with baking paper.
- 4** Preheat oven to 180C and line an oven tray with baking paper. Shallow-fry pastries in equal

quantities of olive oil and butter in a large frying pan in batches until golden brown (4–5 minutes), flip over, transfer to prepared tray and finish cooking in oven until crisp and cooked through (2–3 minutes). Serve with cucumber yoghurt.

Note Yufka pastry is available from Turkish and Middle Eastern grocers. If it's unavailable substitute 5 sheets of filo.

Wine suggestion Pazos de Lusco Albarino.

Beef tartare with baharat spice, hummus and lemon sauce

"Make sure you buy the beef on the day you intend to make this dish – it must be impeccably fresh and really good quality," says Hafner. "The Middle Eastern flavours here are inspired by Yotam Ottolenghi's book *Jerusalem*, which I'm loving at the moment." Baharat is an Arabic spice blend of mainly pepper, cumin, coriander, clove, cardamom cinnamon and nutmeg.

Prep time 25 mins, cook 10 mins (plus chilling)

Serves 4–6 as an appetiser (pictured p124)

- 250 gm beef eye fillet, finely chopped by hand (see hot tip p124)
- ⅓ tsp ground allspice
- ½ tsp each ground cinnamon and finely ground white pepper
- 10 fine gratings of nutmeg
- ½ Spanish onion, finely chopped
- ½ red birdseye chilli, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup (loosely packed) flat-leaf parsley, torn
- ½ cup (loosely packed) mint leaves, torn
- Juice of 1 lemon, or to taste
- 1 tsp white vinegar, or to taste
- 1 tsp sumac, or to taste
- 200 gm hummus
- Toasted pine nuts and crusty baguette or toasted pita bread, to serve

- 1** Mix beef, spices and 1 tsp sea salt flakes in a bowl and refrigerate for flavours to combine (15 minutes). Add onion, chilli and olive oil, and check seasoning, adding more salt if necessary.
 - 2** Just before serving, mix parsley, mint, lemon juice, vinegar, sumac and a pinch of salt in a bowl.
 - 3** Spread hummus on a platter or two, top with beef mixture, pressing to form a neat shape, then top with parsley mixture and pine nuts and serve with crusty baguette or warm toasted pita bread.
- Drink suggestion** Coedo Kyara India Pale Ale.

Salted almonds toasted in olive oil

"This is a super-simple recipe," says Hafner. "We make these almonds fresh every day at the Gertrude Street Enoteca and they're a really delicious nibble to have with a drink."

Prep time 5 mins, cook 10 mins

Serves 6 as an appetiser (pictured p124)

- 250 ml (1 cup) olive oil
- 250 gm blanched skinless almonds

- 1** Slowly bring olive oil and almonds to the boil in a saucepan over low-medium heat and stir occasionally until golden brown (6–8 minutes). Drain in a metal sieve and shake to remove excess oil. While still warm, toss almonds in a bowl with 2 tsp sea salt flakes and serve.

Wine suggestion Navazos de Bota Palo Cortado Sherry.

Roast duck with orange, bay, juniper and red wine

"I buy duck from a specialist poultry supplier, the Chicken Pantry in Queen Victoria Market. It's worth the effort to buy a genuine free-range duck," says Hafner. "I always roast my duck until it's well done; the flavour is much better when the fat has rendered all the way through, and it will be more tender than if you try to keep the meat pink." Serve with date and preserved lemon chutney (see recipe p126).

Prep time 20 mins, cook 3 hrs (plus resting)

Serves 4–6 (pictured p120)

- 3 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled, coarsely chopped
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 orange
- 2.2 kg duck, at room temperature, rinsed and patted dry with paper towels
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 4 juniper berries
- 375 ml dry red wine

- 1** Preheat oven to 175C and place vegetables in a roasting pan.
 - 2** Pierce orange all over with a sharp-pointed knife. Season duck with salt inside and out, then place orange, bay leaves and juniper berries inside the cavity and use a long skewer to stitch up opening. Place duck on top of vegetables and roast for 30 minutes, then pour in red wine and roast until duck is well browned and juices run clear when thigh is pierced with a knife (2–2½ hours). Remove from oven, remove orange from duck cavity and pour pan juices into a tall jug. Cover duck with foil and set aside for 20 minutes to rest.
 - 3** When orange is cool enough to handle, cut in half and squeeze juice into jug with pan juices and set aside until fat has settled on the top, then skim off (reserve in freezer for roasting potatoes). Pour juices through a fine sieve into a saucepan and reduce over medium-high heat until flavourful (3–5 minutes; the sauce will not thicken). Serve duck with sauce and date and preserved lemon chutney (see recipe p126).
- Wine suggestion** Avani Syrah 2011 or 2012.>



Prawn briouats

WINTER DINNER PARTY

- + Prawn briouats
- + Salted almonds toasted in olive oil
- + Beef tartare with baharat spice, hummus and lemon sauce
- + Roast duck with orange, bay, juniper and red wine
- + English spinach sautéed with cumin seeds
- + Devendra's roasted spiced potatoes
- + Date and preserved lemon chutney
- + Rhubarb dumplings

Salted almonds toasted
in olive oil (RECIPE P122)

Beef tartare with baharat spice,
hummus and lemon sauce
(RECIPE P122)





HOT TIP

When making beef tartare, it's best by far to hand-cut the meat using your best knife; if you do it in a food processor you'll end up with paste. Use top-notch beef and keep it as chilled as possible.

TABLE SPREAD Hastoe Windsor chair (at back) from Spence and Lyda. Tom Dixon copper bowls from De De Ce. Vases from Chuchu. Candleholder and straight-sided smoky glass from Cult. Wine carafe, rounded glass and Society napkins from Ondene. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

English spinach with cumin seeds

"My friend Devendra Singh is a great Indian cook," says Hafner. "His approach when using spice is delicate and simple, and I always think there's beautiful clarity to a dish using only two or three spices, but he uses them

with great care and intent. This recipe came about when we cooked lunch together recently and I said 'I'm cooking roast duck and plucking greens out of the garden, and you're going to cook them!'"

Prep time 10 mins, cook 5 mins (plus resting)
Serves 4-6 as a side (pictured p121)

- 500 gm (about 1 bunch) spinach, halved through the stem
- 60 ml (¼ cup) extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
- 1 small dried red chilli
- ½ tsp coarsely crushed cumin seeds
- 2 tsp freshly ground coriander

1 Wash spinach well in 2-3 lots of fresh water, then drain well in a colander. Heat oil in a large wide saucepan over medium-high heat, add chilli and cumin, and sauté, stirring occasionally, until deep golden brown (1 minute). Add spinach, season with sea salt flakes and stir occasionally until just wilted (1 minute). Stir in coriander, drain any excess liquid and serve warm topped with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil.

Devendra's roasted spiced potatoes

Prep time 15 mins, cook 1½ hrs

Serves 4-6 as a side (pictured p120)

- 1.2 kg (about 6) floury potatoes, such as kestrel or King Edward, scrubbed
- 1½ tsp coriander seeds
- ¼ tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) extra-virgin olive oil

1 Preheat oven to 200C. Simmer potatoes whole in a large saucepan of salted water until tender (25-30 minutes). Drain, cool and peel, then cut into rough 4cm-5cm chunks.

2 Dry-roast coriander and cumin seeds until fragrant (see cook's notes p176). Cool briefly, then finely grind in a spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle. Add turmeric and chilli flakes, transfer to a roasting pan along with olive oil and potatoes and toss to coat, season to taste and roast, turning occasionally, until potatoes are crunchy on the outside (35-40 minutes). Serve hot with duck.

Date and preserved lemon chutney

"My husband, Patrick, grew up in Hong Kong and as a result he has an insatiable appetite for chutneys that he'll happily pair with just about anything I cook," says Hafner. "This desire to match meat with something sweet and piquant has rubbed off, so I've developed a small repertoire of chutneys. This is one of my favourites from my time cooking with Middle Eastern maestro Greg Malouf."

Prep time 15 mins, cook 25 mins

Makes about 500ml (pictured p120)

- 200 gm pitted dried dates
- 200 gm brown sugar
- 1 tbsp coarsely chopped ginger
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- Seeds from 5 cardamom pods
- 50 gm (¼ cup) finely chopped preserved lemon rind
- 2 tbsp Sherry or red wine vinegar

1 Combine dates, brown sugar, ginger, coriander, cardamom and a good pinch of salt in a saucepan with 250ml water and simmer, covered, until dates are very soft (20-25 minutes). Add preserved lemon and vinegar, then blend in a food processor until smooth. Cool chutney, then add salt to taste – it should taste sweet and sour. Serve with roast duck. Chutney will keep refrigerated in an airtight container for 2 weeks.

Rhubarb dumplings

"My mother comes from Bavaria where potatoes are used many different ways," says Hafner. "In fact, she has a very old Dr Oetker cookbook, which has 200 recipes devoted to the potato! Quite a few of those are desserts (Germans are pretty inventive when it comes to the humble potato). These potato dumplings rolled in buttery cinnamon breadcrumbs and stuffed with rhubarb compote are her recipe – she also uses Angelina plums in autumn, which are equally delicious. You really only need one for dessert, but any leftovers are delicious the next day cold."

Prep time 40 mins, cook 50 mins

Makes 9

- 500 gm (about 3) Desiree potatoes
- 50 gm fine semolina
- 40 gm plain flour, plus extra for coating
- 1 egg yolk
- 150 gm fine fresh white breadcrumbs
- 60 gm butter, diced
- 75 gm caster sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Rhubarb compote

- 400 gm rhubarb (about 1 bunch), washed and cut into 2cm pieces
- 150 gm raw caster sugar
- 1 piece thinly peeled orange rind
- Juice of ½ lemon

1 For rhubarb compote, place rhubarb in a saucepan, sprinkle with sugar and stand until juices to start seep out (20-25 minutes). Add orange rind and lemon juice and simmer over low heat, covered with a lid and stirring occasionally, until rhubarb is just tender, but still holds its shape (4-6 minutes). Set aside to cool in pan, then refrigerate until required.

2 Simmer potatoes in a large saucepan of water until tender (25-30 minutes). Drain well then, when cool enough to handle, peel and pass through a mouli (or mash and pass through a coarse sieve) into a bowl. Add semolina, flour and egg yolk, mix to a smooth dough (it should be firm but not sticky; lightly dust with flour if necessary), cover and set aside.

3 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 180C, spread breadcrumbs on an oven tray and toast, stirring occasionally, until light golden (4-6 minutes). Heat butter in a large frying pan over medium heat until foaming, add sugar, cinnamon and breadcrumbs, and stir continuously until crumbs are golden brown (1-2 minutes). Set aside.

4 Divide dough into 9 pieces of about 50gm (2½ tbsp). Working with a piece at a time, roll in your hand, dusting with a little flour, to form a smooth ball, then flatten to about 1.5cm thick and place a teaspoonful of rhubarb compote (but no liquid) in the centre. Roll dough around compote to enclose, sealing any patches where filling seeps through, place on a tray and repeat with remaining dough and compote.

5 Blanch dumplings very gently in a large saucepan of barely simmering water until they float (15 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon, gently shake off excess water, and place on paper towels briefly to drain. Roll in crumbs to coat evenly and serve with extra compote.

Drink suggestion Pennyweight Muscat. ●



Rhubarb dumplings

DUMPLINGS Small pot with lid from Wingnut and Co. Vase from Chuchu. Tom Dixon copper bowl from De De Ce. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p175.

GUNGO

Victor Liong is going places. After winning renown with his modern spin on popular Chinese classics, he's taking his restaurant, Lee Ho Fook, to a new home in Melbourne's CBD. It calls for a celebration, banquet-style.

RECIPES **VICTOR LIONG** WORDS **MICHAEL HARDEN** PHOTOGRAPHY **SHARYN CAIRNS**
STYLING **LISA FEATHERBY** DRINK SUGGESTIONS **MASA NISHIMOTO**



CHOW DOWN

Clockwise, from top
left: Victor Liang, Triin
Vink, Liam Kyle, Mike
Li and Ryan Tang.



Pickled black
fungus (RECIPE P131)



Xinjiang-style lamb skewers
(RECIPE P132)



Victor Liong has made a name for himself in Melbourne with his modern riffs on trad Chinese food and now, two years after opening Lee Ho Fook in Collingwood, he's excited about his move this month to the CBD.

"We couldn't say no to the location," he says of the former woolstore building in Duckboard Place. "But it's a tricky space, quite tight, so it needed a bit of thought. That's where you can get more creative. I wanted it to be the opposite of the concrete, industrial look that you see all over Melbourne, so it's going to be quite old-school, with carpet, no open kitchen, and with the dining room upstairs and the kitchen downstairs."

It's this kind of creative thinking that has seen Liong, who worked at Marque and Mr Wong in Sydney before moving to Melbourne, gather a pile of accolades for his clever, innovative food, including a nomination for Best New Talent in last year's *Gourmet Traveller* Restaurant Awards.

Consider this a preview of what's to come in the new space – these recipes feature on the winter menu at Lee Ho Fook (named after the Chinese restaurant in the Warren


Zevon song "Werewolves of London"). "The food sticks to the original idea I had of doing funky, cool Chinese," says Liong, "but I have more confidence in the food now, more control over the precision and the ingredients. It's now a combination of modern twists on traditional Chinese dishes and techniques, and reworked versions of popular Chinese dishes."

The recipes here, from the Fujian-style scallop and crab fried rice to the steamed barra with chilli black beans and pickled mustard greens, and green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream with caramelised pineapple, reflect Liong's range of influences. "Some of my food comes from childhood flavour memories, some from travelling, and there's also an element of my background in classic European cooking. With ingredients, I'm influenced by regionality and the seasons."

As for the old Collingwood site, he's going to make it a more casual and bar-like affair, with cocktails, music and a menu inspired by Chinese street food. He's excited about that, too. *Lee Ho Fook opens this month at 11-15 Duckboard Pl, Melbourne, Vic, leehofook.com.au*

LEE HO FOOK BANQUET

- + Pickled black fungus
- + Xinjiang-style lamb skewers
- + Chinese mushrooms with warrigal greens and Jerusalem artichokes
- + Steamed barramundi, chilli black beans and pickled mustard greens
- + Fujian-style scallop and spanner crab fried rice
- + White-cut chicken, aromatic chilli oil and peanuts
- + Caramelised pineapple with green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream



Chinese mushrooms
with warrigal greens
and Jerusalem artichokes



VICTOR LIONG

Pickled black fungus

"Black fungus has a unique texture and also carries the flavour of a dressing really well," says Victor Liong. "I liked the idea of a textural, clean appetiser – it's my homage to old-school Chinese ingredients, but with a newer approach, serving it as a refreshing pickle." Start this recipe a day ahead to marinate the fungus.

Prep time 15 mins, cook 2 mins (plus marinating)

Serves 4-6 as an appetiser (pictured p129)

- 1½ tbsp vegetable oil
- 200 gm black fungus, hard stems trimmed with scissors
- 30 ml Shaoxing wine
- 20 gm ginger, cut into julienne
- Coriander leaves, to serve
- Black vinegar dressing**
- 100 ml soy sauce
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) sugar syrup (see note)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) Chinkiang vinegar
- 1½ tbsp vegetable oil
 - 1 tbsp sesame oil
 - 1 tsp chilli oil (see note)
- 10 gm ginger, finely grated on a Microplane
- 1 small garlic clove, finely grated on a Microplane

- 1** Heat oil in a wok over high heat, add fungus and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add Shaoxing wine and stir-fry until liquid reduces (1 minute). Place in a colander to drain and cool to room temperature.
- 2** For dressing, whisk ingredients and 100ml water in a non-reactive container (see cook's notes p176). Add fungus and ginger, and refrigerate overnight to marinate.

- 3** Place pickled black fungus in a serving bowl, drizzle with a little dressing, top with coriander and serve.

Note For sugar syrup, combine equal parts caster sugar and water, bring to the boil, then cool. Chilli oil is available from Asian supermarkets; Victor Liong prefers the Koon Yick Wah Kee brand.

Drinks suggestion A fresh crisp white wine, such as a 2011 Wanted Man White Label Marsanne Viognier. Or a lager-style beer, such as Tsingtao.

Chinese mushrooms with warrigal greens and Jerusalem artichokes

"I like how this dish looks like the season we're in," says Liong. "The earthy tones of the mushrooms, the leafy aesthetics of the Jerusalem artichokes, the meaty texture of the warrigal greens – it's a wonderful vegetable stir-fry."

Prep time 20 mins, cook 20 mins

Serves 4-6 as part of a banquet or side dish

- 100 gm each shimeji and oyster mushrooms, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 100 gm shiitake mushrooms, stems trimmed and halved
- 50 gm enoki mushrooms, cut into 2cm batons
- 30 gm warrigal greens, leaves only (see note)
- 2¾ tsp (10gm) tapioca starch, dissolved in 1 tbsp cold water
- Mushroom stock**
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- ½ onion, thinly sliced
- ½ spring onion, green part only, chopped
- 1 tbsp thinly sliced ginger
- 2 coriander stems



- 1 large garlic clove, bruised
- 6 gm (2 tbsp) dried porcini mushrooms
- 1¼ tbsp white soy sauce (see note)
- ¾ tsp caster sugar
- ½ tsp chicken stock powder, such as Knorr (see note)

Jerusalem artichoke chips

Vegetable oil, for frying

- 150 gm (2 large) Jerusalem artichokes, washed and very thinly sliced on a mandolin

- 1** For mushroom stock, heat oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, add onion, spring onion, ginger, coriander stems and garlic, and sauté until golden (6-8 minutes). Place dried porcini in a large saucepan with 800ml water and bring to the boil. Add onion mixture, bring back to the boil, then simmer over low heat to develop flavours (20 minutes). Strain and stir in remaining ingredients and ½ tsp salt.

- 2** For artichoke chips, heat 5cm oil in a deep saucepan to 175C and fry artichoke slices in batches, stirring constantly, until crisp and golden brown (2-4 minutes). Drain on paper towels.

- 3** Top up oil to about 8cm deep and heat to 180C. Deep-fry shimeji, oyster and shiitake mushrooms in batches until golden brown (1-2 minutes), then drain in a colander.

- 4** Bring mushroom stock to the boil, add fried mushrooms and simmer for mushrooms to absorb stock (1-2 minutes). Add enoki and warrigal greens, and stir-fry until greens just wilt (10-20 seconds). Slowly add tapioca, stirring until a shiny, thickened sauce forms (1-2 minutes). Add a good pinch of ground white pepper, place in bowls, top with artichoke chips and serve.

Note Warrigal greens are available from select greengrocers. To find your local supplier, go to outbackpride.com.au, and see "distributor". White soy sauce, also called shiro shoyu, is available from Japanese grocers such as Tokyo Mart and Chef's Armoury (stockists p175). Knorr chicken stock powder is available at Asian supermarkets.

Wine suggestion A wintry shiraz, such as 2006 Merricks Estate Shiraz.>

Xinjiang-style lamb skewers

"This one is great as a snack or for your next barbecue," says Liong.

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 10 mins
(plus marinating)**

Serves 4-6 as an appetiser (pictured p129)

- 5 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 75 ml Shaoxing wine
- 35 ml liquid seasoning, such as Knorr (see note)
- 200 gm fermented tofu (see note)
- 150 gm sweet bean paste (see note)
- 1½ tsp (7gm) bicarbonate of soda
- 500 gm piece of lamb shoulder, sliced across the grain
- 20 bamboo skewers, soaked in water for at least 1 hour
- Spice seasoning**
 - 1¾ tsp cumin seeds
 - 1 tsp Sichuan peppercorns
 - 1 tsp fennel seeds
 - ¾ tsp sumac
 - ¾ tsp shichimi togarashi (see note)
- Vinegar seasoning**
 - 50 ml Chinkiang vinegar
 - 1 tbs soy sauce

- 1** Blend garlic, Shaoxing and liquid seasoning in a blender. Add fermented tofu and sweet bean paste, blend until smooth, then add bicarbonate of soda. Place lamb in a non-reactive bowl (see cook's notes p176), pour in marinade, mix to coat, then refrigerate for at least 1 hour to marinate. Brush excess marinade from lamb, then thread lamb onto skewers and refrigerate.
- 2** For spice seasoning, coarsely grind cumin, Sichuan peppercorns and fennel seeds in a spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle. Add 1 tsp sea salt and pulse lightly or crush, then add sumac and shichimi togarashi. Store in an airtight container.
- 3** For vinegar seasoning, combine ingredients in a spray bottle.
- 4** Grill lamb skewers on a barbecue or char-grill pan over medium-high heat, turning and spraying occasionally with vinegar seasoning, until charred and just cooked (2-3 minutes each side), sprinkling

with dry spice mix in the last minute of cooking. Serve scattered with extra spice seasoning.

Note Knorr liquid seasoning, fermented tofu, sweet bean paste, also known as tian mian jiang (Victor Liong prefers to use Fu Chi brand), and shichimi togarashi, a Japanese spice blend, are available from Asian supermarkets and Chinese grocers.

Wine suggestion A sparkling shiraz, such as the NV "The Black Chook" Sparkling Shiraz from McLaren Vale.

Steamed barramundi, chilli black beans and pickled mustard greens

"I like the lightness of steamed fish," says Liong.

"Barramundi lends itself perfectly to steaming – it's so juicy and tender, and pairs well with heavier winter flavours like pickles and preserved vegetables. I also like the savoury acidity that mustard greens add to this dish." Start this recipe three days ahead to make the ginger oil and salted chilli.

Prep time 30 mins, cook 35 mins (plus infusing)

Serves 4-6 as part of a banquet

- 400 gm piece of barramundi, skin on and cut into 50gm pieces
- 60 gm pickled mustard greens, thinly sliced (see note)
- 20 gm ginger, peeled and cut into julienne
- 30 ml Shaoxing wine
- 2 spring onions, very thinly sliced
- 1 cup each (loosely packed) coriander and Thai basil
- Ginger oil**
 - 100 ml vegetable oil
- 50 gm ginger, skin on and washed thoroughly
- Salted chilli**
 - 30 gm long red chilli, trimmed and chopped
 - 4 garlic cloves
- 10 gm peeled ginger, coarsely chopped
- Chilli black bean paste**
 - 3 tsp chilli crisp sauce (Lao Gan Ma brand)
 - 2 tsp chopped fermented salted black beans (see note)

1 tsp white vinegar

½ tsp caster sugar

White soy dressing

1 tsp rice wine vinegar

1 tsp caster sugar

1½ tbs soy sauce

1¾ tbs white soy sauce (see note in Chinese mushrooms recipe p131)

- 1** For ginger oil, blend oil and ginger in a blender until smooth, then place in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring and scraping base of pan often to prevent catching, until oil is fragrant (15-20 minutes). Cool to room temperature, then refrigerate in an airtight container for 3 days to infuse. Strain into a bowl through muslin or a fine strainer. This recipe makes more than you need here, but it will keep refrigerated in an airtight container for a month.
 - 2** For salted chilli, process ingredients in a small food processor with a generous teaspoonful (6gm) of fine salt until finely chopped, then transfer to a container with a lid, cover and stand at room temperature overnight to ferment. Refrigerate in an airtight container until required.
 - 3** For chilli bean paste, combine ingredients and salted chilli in a bowl, then refrigerate overnight for flavours to develop.
 - 4** For white soy dressing, whisk ingredients and 50ml water in a bowl and set aside.
 - 5** Place barramundi on a large plate that fits inside a large steamer. Cover generously with chilli bean paste, top with mustard greens and ginger, pour Shaoxing over and steam over high heat, until fish is cooked and a skewer inserted pierces the flesh easily (10-12 minutes).
 - 6** To serve, transfer fish to a serving dish, pour dressing over, top with spring onions, coriander and Thai basil and drizzle with ginger oil to taste.
- Note** Pickled mustard greens and fermented salted black beans are available from Asian supermarkets.
- Wine suggestion** A savoury pinot noir, such as a 2011 Glaetzer-Dixon Rêveur Pinot Noir.





Fujian-style scallop and spanner crab fried rice

"This is a classic dish that has it all," says Liong. "There's heat and depth from the XO sauce, a comforting, rich scallop and spanner crab sauce and egg fried rice – a winter classic, often poorly executed." Start this recipe at least half a day ahead to dry the rice.

Prep time 20 mins, cook 45 mins (plus drying)

Serves 4-6 as part of a banquet

- 250 gm jasmine rice, rinsed and drained at least 3 times to remove excess starch
- 80 ml (⅓ cup) vegetable oil
- 2 eggs whisked with 1 egg yolk
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp chicken stock powder, such as Knorr (see note in Chinese mushrooms recipe p131)
- ½ tsp ground white pepper
- 1 tbs XO sauce
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced

Fujian seafood sauce

- 350 ml chicken stock
- 70 ml white soy sauce (see note in Chinese mushrooms recipe p131)
- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp ginger oil (see steamed barramundi recipe opposite), or ¼ tsp finely grated ginger
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1½ eggwhites (50gm)
- 80 gm spanner crab meat
- 80 gm scallops, cut into small pieces
- 30 gm tapioca starch, dissolved in 50ml cold water

1 Place rice and 480ml water in a saucepan with a tight-fitting lid and bring to the boil over medium-high heat, stirring once, then cover and cook over very low heat for 12 minutes. Turn off heat, don't uncover and leave on residual heat for 20 minutes to finish cooking. Loosen with a fork or spoon, spread out evenly on a tray and fan

occasionally to speed cooling, then refrigerate uncovered to dry completely (3-4 hours).

2 For Fujian seafood sauce, place stock in a saucepan, bring to the boil, then add white soy sauce, sugar, oils and ¼ tsp salt. Bring back to the boil and whisk in eggwhites to scramble (30-40 seconds), then add seafood and simmer until just cooked (1-2 minutes). Add tapioca starch and stir until sauce thickly coats the back of a spoon (1-2 minutes). Keep warm.

3 Heat oil in a wok over high heat until smoking. Add eggs and stir to scramble (1 minute), then add rice and stir-fry, breaking it up as you go, until hot (2-3 minutes). Add sugar, chicken stock powder and pepper, and stir to coat rice. Add XO sauce and spring onions, season to taste, transfer to a serving bowl, pour over Fujian sauce and serve.

Wine suggestion A white Burgundy, such as a 2011 Domaine Louis Moreau Les Clos Grand Crus Chablis, or other rich chardonnay.

Fujian-style scallop and spanner crab fried rice



Steamed barramundi, chilli black beans and pickled mustard greens



White-cut chicken, aromatic chilli oil and peanuts

"White-cut chicken, in my opinion, is one of the great Chinese techniques," says Liong. "It preserves the succulence of the meat and showcases its silky texture. We've made it with a complex yet light dressing to add interest to a classic technique." Start this recipe a day ahead to make the salted chilli.

Prep time 30 mins, cook 50 mins (plus cooling, chilling)

Serves 4-6 as part of a banquet (pictured p134)

- 200 ml vegetable oil
- 1½ tbs Sichuan peppercorns
- 1 quantity salted chilli (see barramundi recipe opposite)
- 100 gm chillies in oil (Lao Gan Ma brand)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) chilli oil (see note in pickled black fungus recipe p131)
- Finely chopped spring onions, sesame seeds, coriander leaves, to serve
- 1 lemon>



White-cut chicken,
aromatic chilli oil and
peanuts (RECIPE P133)

White-cut chicken

- 650 ml Shaoxing wine
- 80 gm fine salt
- 20 gm ginger, unpeeled and thinly sliced
- 1 large spring onion,
- 4 chicken Marylands (about 350gm each)

Crisp peanuts

- 30 gm raw peeled peanuts
- Vegetable oil, for frying

Soy dressing

- 125 ml (½ cup) soy sauce
- 60 ml (¼ cup) Chinkiang vinegar
- 60 ml (¼ cup) mirin
- 2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1½ tbsp sugar syrup (see note in pickled black fungus recipe p131)
- 1 small garlic clove, finely grated on a microplane
- 5 gm ginger, finely grated on a microplane

1 For white-cut chicken, bring Shaoxing, salt, ginger, onion and 4 litres water to the boil in a large saucepan or stockpot with a tight-fitting lid over high heat. Add chicken, bring back to the boil, cover, then turn off heat and leave chicken to cook until juices run clear when a skewer is inserted at the joint and internal temperature is 70C on a meat thermometer (40-45 minutes).

Remove chicken from stock, cool briefly, then refrigerate until chilled (2-3 hours). Cut chicken at intervals through the bone and refrigerate until required.

2 Meanwhile, for crisp peanuts, mix 2 tsp salt with 500ml water in a saucepan, add peanuts, bring to the boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium and simmer until peanuts are al dente (20-25 minutes). Drain well in a colander. Heat 5cm oil in a wok over high heat until it shimmers. Add peanuts and fry, stirring continuously, until golden brown (2 minutes). Drain on paper towels and cool. Peanuts will keep stored in an airtight container for 4 weeks.

3 For soy dressing, whisk ingredients in a bowl. Dressing will keep refrigerated in an airtight container for 2 weeks.

4 Heat vegetable oil and Sichuan peppercorns in a wok over low-medium heat until peppercorns float and start to turn a lighter shade of red (1-2 minutes). Add salted chilli and cook until most of the moisture is cooked out and oil is aromatic (3-4 minutes). Add chillies in oil and cook until paste is uniform in colour (1-2 minutes). Remove from heat, add chilli oil and cool completely before using.

5 To serve, place sliced chicken in a deep serving dish, pour soy dressing over, then salted chilli oil

to taste (remaining oil will keep refrigerated in an airtight container for up to a month), sprinkle with chopped peanuts, spring onions, sesame seeds and coriander, and finely grate lemon rind over the top.

Wine suggestion A German-style aromatic riesling with a bit of sweetness to counter the heat, such as a 2012 Heymann-Löwenstein Shieferterrassen Riesling.

Caramelised pineapple with green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream

"This combination was first introduced to me by Mark Best of Sydney's Marque restaurant when I was a chef de partie there," says Liang. "I loved it so much I stole it – thanks Besty."

Prep time 15 mins, cook 45 mins
(plus freezing, cooling)

Serves 4-6 as part of a banquet

600 gm caster sugar

300 gm pineapple, cut into 8mm dice

Green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream

20 gm green Sichuan peppercorns (see note)

1.2 litres milk

300 ml pouring cream

200 gm caster sugar

12 egg yolks

1 For green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream, preheat oven to 160C. Roast peppercorns on a tray, stirring occasionally, until aromatic (10-15 minutes), then place in a saucepan with milk and cream and bring to the boil. Meanwhile, whisk sugar and egg yolks in a bowl until light and fluffy, then add hot milk mixture, whisking continuously. Return to pan and stir continuously over low heat until mixture reaches 85C on a sugar thermometer (15-20 minutes). Pour into a bowl placed over a bowl filled with ice to cool, then strain mixture through a sieve (discard peppercorns). Churn in an ice-cream machine, then freeze in an airtight container. Makes 2 litres.

2 Bring sugar and 200ml water to the boil in a saucepan over high heat, stirring until sugar dissolves, then boil without stirring until a dark caramel forms or it reaches 160C on a sugar thermometer (10-12 minutes). Remove from heat, slowly add pineapple pieces (be careful, hot caramel will spit) and stir into caramel, then return pan to heat and bring back to the boil. Cool to room temperature (about an hour), then strain caramel into a bowl, refrigerate pineapple in a container to chill and reserve caramel at room temperature.

3 To serve, spoon a little caramelised pineapple into serving bowls, top with a generous scoop of ice-cream and drizzle with caramel.

Note Green Sichuan peppercorns are available from Asian supermarkets.

Drink suggestion Jasmine tea. ●

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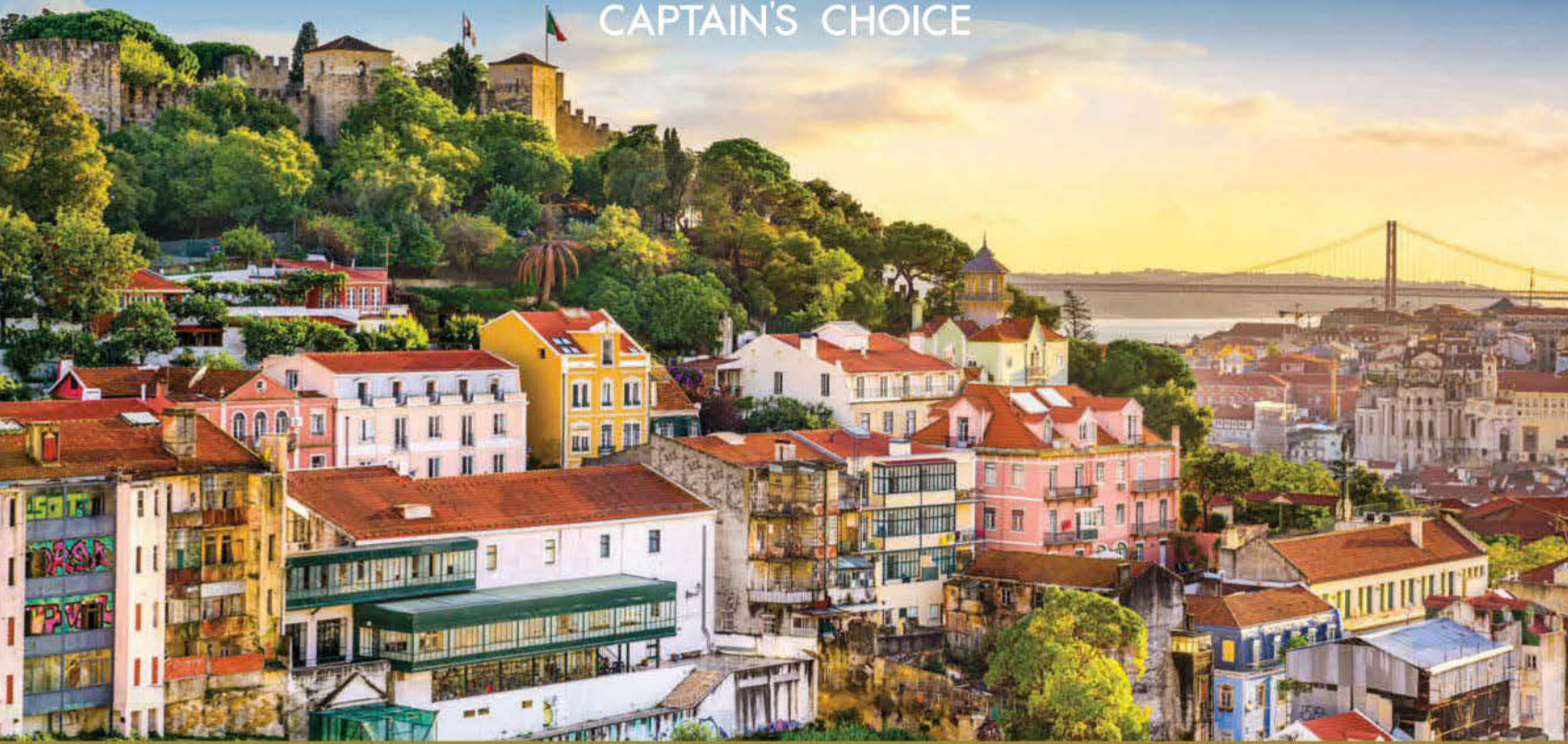


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Caramelised pineapple with green Sichuan peppercorn ice-cream





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AUGUST 2015

travel

Aspen's Champagne-powder slopes and Munich's beer-drenched dining halls dish up fun times.

Twin peaks Cougars and Champagne in Aspen, pagans and pubs in Crested Butte – from her black-run vantage, Clair Weaver tells a tale of adrenaline, excess and two mountains.

Mad about Munich Is this Western Europe's most unlikely culinary capital? Rob Ingram uncovers the best – and the wurst – of dining and drinking in Munich. Prost!

Halcyon Days A love of food, travel and laid-back luxury have come together at Halcyon House, a chic new boutique hotel born out of a retro surf motel on the northern New South Wales coast.

PHOTOGRAPHY JULIAN KINGMA



TWIN PEAKS

Cougars and Champagne in Aspen, pagans and pubs in Crested Butte – from her black-run vantage, *Clair Weaver* tells a tale of adrenaline, excess and two mountains.

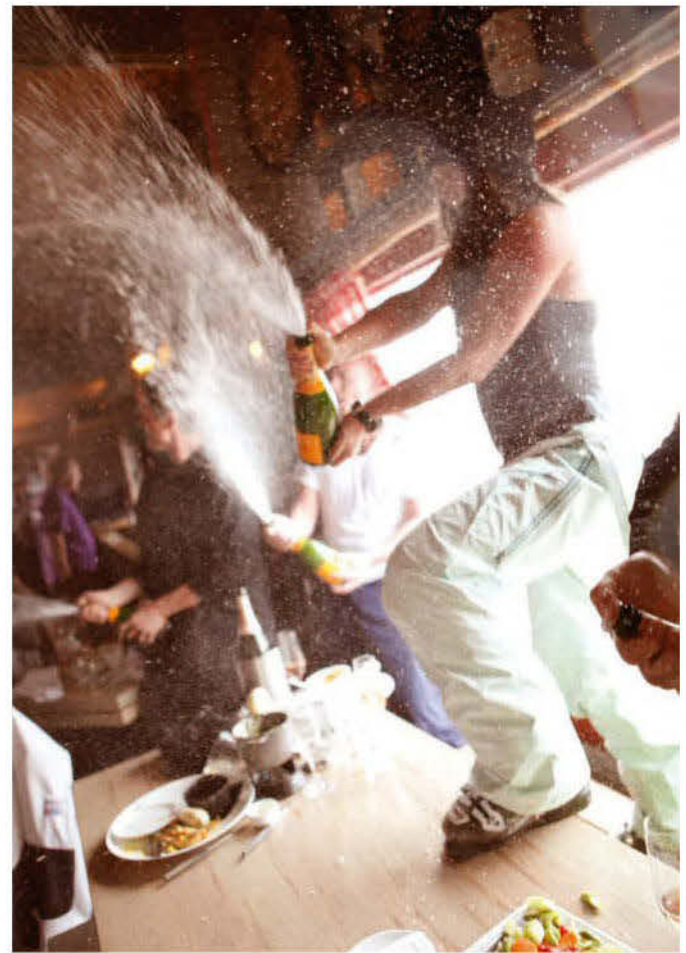
PHOTOGRAPHY JULIAN KINGMA





OFF-PISTE

Guide Bobby DeMarinis leads the way on the snowshoe tour. Opposite: Main Street, Aspen.



It's raining Champagne. Thermal clothing is being tossed to the floor, wooden benches are shaking under the weight of dancing ski boots and dozens of bottles of Veuve Clicquot are being shaken and sprayed into the air, Formula One style. Three tanned women in their 40s with inflated lips have stripped down to their singlets and are grinding against each other provocatively. A group of teenage boys cheer them on enthusiastically. A middle-aged man with glasses who looks as if he could be a CEO back in the real world is wearing earplugs.

"*I don't ca-are*," blares Icona Pop's dance anthem through the loudspeakers, "*I love it, I love it*." The volume is up, more Champagne is delivered to tables and the stamping of ski boots becomes more frenetic.

Welcome to lunchtime at Cloud Nine, a wood cabin bistro midway up Highlands mountain in the exclusive ski resort of Aspen, Colorado. Only a few minutes ago, diners were mopping up lip-smacking fondue and raclette and making plans to capitalise on fresh powder tomorrow. But now here they are dancing exuberantly atop benches lined with white napkins, shiny-faced and laughing as they spray each other liberally with seemingly endless Champagne.

The party climaxes with a rendition of Rednex's fast-paced folk song "Cotton Eye Joe", which sends ski

boots into a new frenzy. A lunch companion dances so vigorously that he bangs his head on the roof.

And then, as quickly as it started, it's over. The music stops at 3.30pm and a gust of cold air cuts through the now sauna-humid room as ski patrol wanders through, checking everyone's in a fit state to ski down the mountain. "If you see them trying to put their skis on the wrong way," a bearded patroller tells us, "that's a pretty good clue."

Believe it or not, this is a regular closing ritual. It happens almost every day. Indeed, the staff, who wear T-shirts emblazoned with the Cloud Nine motto "Ski in, dance out", seem unperturbed by the wild hedonism playing out around them.

This is, we're told, the highest-grossing restaurant in Colorado in winter. Sweeping a last glance over the dozens of abandoned half-full Champagne bottles, this isn't terribly surprising. It's sheer, uninhibited decadence at its best.

Aspen has a reputation for being a luxury winter playground for the rich and famous – and it's not hard to see why. The terrain is superb for skiing, with a great mix of intermediate and advanced options, including exhilarating wide runs, challenging mogul fields and beautiful glade trails. It's convenient if you have a private jet (scores of them are parked up at the airport). Real estate is among the most expensive in the United States – a cool \$50 million for a house on the ridge, for example – and there's a plethora of five-star hotels, spas, wine cellars and fine-dining restaurants. Lining the well-kept and partly cobbled streets of the town are

ON CLOUD NINE

Above from left: skiing the slopes in Aspen; Champagne shower in Cloud Nine.



high-end designer boutiques: Chanel, Burberry, Gucci, Dior, Dolce & Gabbana and a large Prada.

Aspen makes for interesting people-watching in high season: the perma-tanned silver foxes, their cosmetically enhanced trophy wives and privileged college students immersing themselves in the après-ski scene. Hollywood stars Jack Nicholson and Goldie Hawn have holiday homes here, as does disgraced cyclist Lance Armstrong (Nicholson, we're informed, is quiet and unassuming, skiing around in a "faded onesie" ski suit with no airs or graces. Armstrong, on the other hand, is "very competitive"). Other regulars have included Rupert Murdoch, Dustin Hoffman, Yoko Ono and the late Robin Williams.

This is only one side of Aspen, though. It's a popular destination for mere mortals, too, and Australians are the number-one overseas market – so much so that the flat white is officially recognised here. At the cosy Victoria's café near the gondola station to go up the main Ajax mountain, you can also order Milo or a piccolo from an Australian barista.

It's a long way to come but there's enough variety in accommodation, restaurants and services that it doesn't have to be a total blow-out in cost. You could, for example, book a self-catering apartment and buy supplies at the local supermarket but, having said that, the food and wine scene shouldn't be skipped. It's worth treating yourself to excellent sashimi and sublime sea bass at the busy Matsuhisa restaurant (where there's a "celebrity table" in the corner) and enlivening your tastebuds with a tequila cocktail at hipster joint Jimmy's Bodega. Another couple of must-do rituals are getting up early for first tracks (there's nothing quite like skiing through freshly groomed corduroy snow) before

digging into oatmeal pancakes at famed mid-mountain eatery Bonnie's, and later kicking back in the afternoon sunshine with a cold beer and paper cone of parmesan, parsley and truffle fries at the Ajax Tavern.

The resident population of Aspen is as interesting as the visitors. It would be hard to find a comparable town so full of sporty high-achievers (when one adventurer volunteered to give a talk about his recent Everest expedition, there was a shrug of shoulders and a polite decline given it was hardly a first).

Among them are Ted Mahon, 42, a respected mountaineer who fuels his ultra-running events with flat Coca-Cola, and his wife Christy, 40, the first woman to hike and ski all of Colorado's 4267-metre peaks. We chat to them over boards of cured meats, local cheeses and spiced vegetables at newly opened Meat & Cheese, a trendy upmarket restaurant with a focus on farmhouse produce. "Aspen is unique," says Ted. "It's got the combination of town, snow and culture." Christy, an exuberant blonde who regularly skins up a mountain before starting her work day, adds, "I wouldn't want to live anywhere else." She says the service is "more polished" and seamless in Aspen, compared with other resorts in Colorado.

It's while on a snowshoe nature tour – wearing modern versions of badminton racquet-style snowshoes and learning how to decipher the tracks of different animals – that we first hear about the cougars that prowl around the Rockies. "We get cougars up here, but you don't see them," says Bobby DeMarinis, an earnest young guide from the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies. "Even if they were 20 metres away from you, they'd be gone before you see them because they have such a highly tuned sense of hearing and vibration.">

HIGH LIFE

Above from left: Crested Butte; fondue at Cloud Nine; Glo Cunningham, of the Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum.

A ski patrol checks everyone's in a *fit state to ski* down the mountain. "If you see them trying to put their skis on the wrong way," a patroller tells us, "that's a pretty good clue."



Inspired by our venture into the wilderness, with birds chirping in the trees and squirrels scampering up trunks, we tramp back to our meeting point discussing the extraordinary beauty of nature.

When we turn a corner and spy a pack of cougars, the sight is jaw-dropping – five mature-aged women with pneumatic assets, stripped down to bikini tops, pouting and striking saucy poses with a hint of G-string for a wild-haired Irishman wielding a camera on top of the mountain. They giggle as onlookers turn to watch.

After they've put their clothes back on, we get chatting. They're a group of friends who live in different countries, and once a year they meet in Aspen for a ski holiday. "We have fun together," purrs Kate Taylor, a glamorous brunette in a Russian fur hat who comes from the British tax haven of Jersey. Another casually refers to owning a castle in Ireland. None wish to reveal their biological ages.

A stone's throw from the cougars' impromptu photo shoot is the Aspen Mountain Club, a private club with sweeping views over the Elk Mountain Range. We head over and enter through a discreet door near the entrance of the popular Sundeck restaurant and find ourselves in an old-world reception area. First, ski boots are removed and placed on individual heaters in a plush locker room and replaced with obligatory cosy slippers. Inside is an impressive 1340 square metres of designer décor, from handwoven rugs and antique tables to an extraordinary antler chandelier. Annual membership is around \$7700, with a one-off fee of \$285,000.

We tuck into hearty Caesar salads and sweet-potato fries with David Perry, COO of the Aspen Skiing Company, who has helped reinvigorate the

town since being installed by the Crown family, the sole owners of the company since 1993.

"When I first came in 13 years ago I thought, 'Gee this place is getting pretty sleepy'," says Perry. "And it was getting a reputation for being a place for old white guys. So we started putting on free concerts to attract young people." Among big names they've attracted to play gigs are Neil Young, Green Day and Bob Dylan.

Members of the Chicago-based Crown family, whose other holdings include defence giant General Dynamics and JP Morgan Chase, visit Aspen frequently but are "very humble" and maintain a low profile, according to Perry.

Despite Aspen's reputation for attracting high-profile guests, he says there isn't much of an issue with paparazzi, who are nevertheless most likely to turn up with their long lenses at Christmas.

It's certainly come a long way from its irreverent, drug-riddled and lawless past. This is the town in which, in the 1970s, gonzo journalist Hunter S Thompson unsuccessfully stood for sheriff; among his key proposals was to rename Aspen "Fat City".

It was around this time that John Denver wrote songs about Aspen – and if you look carefully, you can>

POWDER PLAY

Below left: revellers on St Patrick's Day. Below: Aspen Mountain Club. Opposite: ski lifts on the Aspen slopes.





find a homemade memorial to him in a cluster of trees on the mountain, decorated with chimes and photos.

"Hunter S Thompson was more recently my neighbour for a little while," says Perry. "He was an arsehole. He was an opinionated, flawed human being. He didn't ski but he would drink a lot. His wife was on the phone with him and they were fighting when she heard him shoot himself in 2005 over the phone."

Originally, Aspen was home to Ute Indians before being settled as a silver-mining town in the 1880s. At the height of the mining boom, its population grew past 10,000 (more than today) but after a price crash it was slowly abandoned. By the 1930s, only 700 people remained. Its development as a ski resort was stymied by the Second World War, when US mountain divisions used it for training and recreation.

For a human history of Aspen, you can't get much better than Klaus Obermeyer. The youthful 95-year-old skiwear designer, who's credited with inventing



holidaymakers would get so cold they'd give up on skiing three days into a 10-day trip, pack up and go home.

"As a ski instructor, I would only get paid if people took their lessons," he says. And so, drawing on his engineering expertise in search of a solution, he cut up the down duvet his mother had given him and made it into a ski jacket. The rest, as they say, is history.

Since then, he has seen enormous change in what was a tiny community when he first arrived to the thriving resort that Aspen is today. Development on the mountains led to a huge influx of ski tourism in the 1950s and '60s. But he pinpoints 20th Century Fox's purchase of the Aspen Skiing Company in 1978 as a game-changer in attracting high-end guests.

"Fox helped us because they brought over the Hollywood actors," he says. "We got Gary Cooper and

"Ingrid Bergman was a very nice lady but she had a very *jealous boyfriend*, who used to hide and watch while she had ski lessons."

the first down jacket, turtleneck and mirrored ski sunglasses, is a charming and lively local legend with a twinkle in his eye.

The German-born entrepreneur still gets out on the pistes every day (look out for a trim and impeccably dressed elderly skier with a big white smile making stylish turns down Ajax), swims, does aikido and maintains a working role at his family skiwear company, Sport Obermeyer. He came to Aspen by chance in 1947 as an aeronautical engineer-turned-ski instructor. "I fell in love with it straight away and thought, 'I'm going to spend the rest of my life here'," he says. "There was this Champagne powder everywhere."

Back then, he says, ski attire comprised "knickerbockers with a tie and shirt and hiking boots attached with leather to wooden skis". Problem was,

Ingrid Bergman – she was a very nice lady but she had a very jealous boyfriend, who used to hide on the mountain and watch while she had ski lessons."

Today it's the positive and friendly vibe of the town – which lives under a utopian ideal of "mind, body, spirit" – that continues to draw a loyal following of visitors from across the globe, according to Obermeyer.

For wine connoisseurs, Aspen is a treasure trove. At The Little Nell five-star hotel, which is internationally renowned for its wine collection, we're treated to a tour of the cellar by sharp-suited and charismatic master sommelier Carlton McCoy. Down here, in narrow aisles under soft yellow light, there are 3000 different types of wine in 22,000 bottles from all over the globe (including Australia and New Zealand). An 1835 bottle of Medina is the oldest, while a 1994 six-litre bottle of Échezeaux is the most expensive at \$67,000. "The

HIGH ACHIEVER

Above, from left: skiwear designer Klaus Obermeyer; downtown Crested Butte. Inset: fettuccine with elk ragù at Cloud Nine.



person who buys this kind of wine is going to be part of a group,” says McCoy, who bought it at auction from a private vendor. “We sell about one bottle a year.”

Another establishment with an impressive cellar is The Caribou Club, the town’s most exclusive private members’ club. Below ground level, it’s a labyrinth of oak panelling, private dining rooms, big couches and a dance floor. Original Andy Warhol prints hang on the wall. We’re greeted by manager Louis Velasquez, who has a spectacular curly mullet and tells us he is so discreet that he doesn’t even tell his wife what goes on behind the club’s doors. “The club opened in 1990,” he says. “The idea was to base it on Annabel’s in London. We have about 1500 members now and because it’s a private club, you have to be strict about the door.” Nevertheless, Velasquez lets slip that Neil Perry and Will Ferrell and Eddie Murphy are among its visitors.

There’s a lot of other stuff going on away from the ski runs in Aspen. The newly refurbished Aspen Art Museum is certainly worth a look, with impressive collections of contemporary artwork and a spacious rooftop café. At the Snowmass Ice Age Discovery Center, you can hear all about the excavation of the world’s finest alpine Ice Age fossil trove – by accident just five years ago when a bulldozer digging at a reservoir to boost the town’s water supply uncovered the tusk of a young mammoth. Within a year, the bones of at least 35 mastodons had been unearthed. “It’s pretty cool to find a major Ice Age fossil site at a ski resort,” says resident palaeontologist Tom Temme. “These mastodons were up to 10-feet tall and weighing eight tonnes and were roaming around more than 10,000 years ago.”

A few kilometres down the road is Krabloonik Fine Dining & Dogsledding. Here, in a traditional log cabin, we feast on Legendary Wild Mushroom soup with house-made bread and an array of rich meats including elk, pheasant and wild boar, along with Californian

chardonnay and a local ale. Outside, teams of dogs are being saddled up to take guests out on sled rides (apparently sitting downwind of canine flatulence is a peril of the trip).

For those who prefer to travel a little faster, a short drive takes you to the T-Lazy-7 Ranch, which has been run by the Deane family for 77 years and hosts excellent snowmobiling tours in the surrounding mountains. After an exhilarating few laps getting in touch with our inner petrolheads and speeding around a makeshift racetrack (“it’s not a racetrack,” insists our guide), we end our tour at the family’s rustic cabin and dig into cheeseburgers made from local grass-fed beef, prawns and salads paired with a refreshing Pierre Gimonnet & Fils Champagne and a smooth 2012 South African FMC Chenin Blanc brought up by The Little Nell’s Nick Barb, who’s studying to become a master sommelier.

Proud young ranch owner Beshia Deane tells us a little about her ancestors as we finish our wine. “My great-great-grandfather was one of the first 40 men who came to Aspen from the Denver area,” she says. “He owned eight blocks of land in Aspen but lost it due to \$56 in back tax.” Today, of course, that would be worth a nine-figure sum.

A more recent tourist attraction in Colorado is cannabis. It was legalised for recreational purposes in 2012. In Aspen, there are six cannabis stores that enjoy strong trade, mostly from visitors. “More than \$2 million in tax [from the sale of cannabis] has already gone into schools,” enthuses a staffer checking IDs at the Silverpeak store. On the other side of the argument, of course, are health risks and concerns about children getting hold of “edibles”, which are usually sold in confectionery, cookie or brownie form.

In a little-known legal quirk, it’s legal to buy and use cannabis in the resort of Aspen (though not publicly) – but not on the mountains, which are federal land and therefore not under the jurisdiction of state law.>



PEAK PERFORMANCE

Above, from left: Aspen Mountain Club; ski tourist Kate Taylor; John Denver shrine on Aspen Mountain.

It's come a long way from its *irreverent, drug-riddled past*. This is the town in which, in the 1970s, Hunter S Thompson unsuccessfully stood for sheriff; among his key proposals was to rename Aspen "Fat City".





Just 19 kilometres away from Aspen is the entirely different resort of Crested Butte. In summer, you can hike across the mountains to get there as a daytrip. By road in winter it's a circuitous four-hour journey (which feels even longer with a hangover). It's worth it, nevertheless. Nestled at the base of the mountain is a laid-back and quaint village with a rainbow of colourful Victorian shopfronts. The locals here are predominately hippies, down-to-earth ranchers and families.

From the town, it's a five-minute journey on a free bus up to the ski resort, which has more of an affordable, casual and young-family vibe than Aspen. There are also more beginner and easy intermediate runs on offer – although on our final day, our Will Ferrell-lookalike ski guide Chris Matison decides we're ready to tackle the double-black diamond North Face, which is frankly a terrifying and barely controlled scrape down ice, moguls, narrow paths and patches of exposed rock. At the bottom, one of the group confides he's glad I came – because then he didn't look so bad.

Fortunately for me, the notorious Rambo – the steepest cut run in North America – is not open. "Rambo is a 50-degree drop at top," says Matison. "If you're standing on the ridge with your bottom ski down, your top ski will be up at knee level of your down leg and you can reach out with your hand to touch the slope because of extreme angle. You can't let yourself fall or you won't stop."

Glo Cunningham, 66, a cheerful hippie with a mane of long grey hair, takes us on a tour of the Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum, which is housed in an original 1883 hardware store building. Back in 1874, we're told, Crested Butte started out as a coal

town, and it wasn't until the 1960s that some ski enthusiasts saw its potential.

Cunningham says Crested Butte was a different place when she arrived 40 years ago. "I saw a lot of the men all hunched over from being in the mines," she says, adding, "I don't think yoga was really big yet then."

In 1963, we're told, the town made history by installing the first automated high-speed gondola: a red bubble with leather seats that looks like something from *The Jetsons* (it should be noted, however, that rival resort Vail also lays claim to this hotly contested record).

Today, the town works hard to maintain its authentic image and prevent overdevelopment. "We're kind of proud of the fact we don't have the chain stores and all that here," says Cunningham.

Across the road from the museum is the Montanya Distillers, where we get tipsy on an assortment of rum cocktail tasters (try the exquisitely sweet and spicy Maharaja Martini). Founder Karen Hoskin, who got inspiration for her recipes during travels in India, gives us a tour, which includes copper fermentation tanks, wooden barrels for ageing and an explanation of how four mountain ingredients make for a superior drink.

Over a meaty lunch at Uley's Cabin (a fine-dining mountain restaurant named after a local character with a passion for food and moonshine), we meet Buck Myall, a bearded bear of a man and veteran ski patroller. "For aspect and variety, you can't really compete with Crested Butte – we have such a wide variety of terrain," he says. Buck, we find out, is also an ex-pagan festival king who still wears his crown for special occasions.

Colourful settlers established a pagan "Flauschink" festive ceremony in 1969 and Buck reigned in 2008>

DINNER AND SNOW

Above, from left: Krabloonik Fine Dining & Dogsledding; Carlton McCoy at the Little Nell wine cellar; Scott Strauss and Sasha, Crested Butte. Opposite: Aspen mountain range.



JOIN THE CLUB

Clockwise, from above: St Regis Remède spa; Jonathan Harp, Crested Butte; Aspen Mountain Club. Opposite: Aspen mountain range.

to 2009. His duties included embodying the spirit of the town, turning up to parties and festivals and polka dancing. How was he chosen? "Divine intervention," he replies. "You're chosen by God." And how did he exert his leadership? "I decreed at the beginning of my reign that all the females should show their breasts. It worked quite well. About 80 per cent were obliging."

Our last supper is at the jam-packed Secret Stash Pizzeria, with a menu that includes pizze with names like You're Driving Me Caprese and Booty Call. We line our stomachs with carbs before a pub crawl through the local bars, including the rough-and-ready Talk of the Town, which has live music, pool tables and people with no teeth, and Dogwood Cocktail Cabin, a dimly lit old bar with board games and delicious cocktails.

Things are less sophisticated in Crested Butte – but it's fun and friendly. And it turned out to be a good acclimatisation for what was to come next.

Landing back home in Sydney, bleary-eyed after the long journey across the Atlantic, we're jolted back to reality as we drag our suitcases off the carousel at the airport. A lengthy queue of travellers snakes through customs ahead of us as we stretch to ease the tightness in our thigh muscles and let our minds wander back to our snow adventures.

We lament the loss of helpful, perennially smiling staff whom we'd got used to so quickly – whisking away heavy bags, booking ahead, catering to our every need and making us feel like VIPs. The massage at St Regis. First tracks in Ajax. The cocktails at Caribou.

But you can't stay on Cloud Nine forever. 67

Skiing: Aspen vs Crested Butte

Generally, the ski terrain is high-quality, diverse and picturesque whichever resort you choose in Colorado. Aspen, however, has a great reputation for several reasons. First, it comprises four mountains across more than 2145 hectares – Aspen (known as Ajax), Snowmass, Highlands and Buttermilk. It's an intermediate skier's delight, with blue runs making up about half the trails. Highlights include pretty glades and long cruises down Ruthie's and International runs on Ajax.

Beginners and snowboarders should head to Buttermilk for nursery slopes and a ski park. Advanced skiers ascend Highlands and trek to the Highland Bowl for an exhilarating drop. Aspen's runs are linked by a network of gondolas (with iPhone docks) and lifts; queues are rare meaning more ski time.

At 607 hectares, Crested Butte is smaller, but has a higher proportion of beginners' runs. It's also excellent for intermediate skiers, with 57 per cent blue runs, and is a favourite for young families, who can ski together down gentle slopes. More adventurous skiers can head to the North Face, home to adrenaline-pumping terrain. Or they can tackle Rambo, a 50-degree steep run that's virtually a cliff face. Because Crested Butte is higher than Aspen, it feels colder. And while crowding isn't an issue on the mountain, expect a queue for a 9am coffee and pastry at Camp 4.

THE FINE PRINT

GETTING THERE

For best rates and packages for Aspen and Crested Butte, contact **Travelplan Ski.**
travelplan.com.au

ASPEN

EAT

The Aspen Mountain Club
c/- Little Nell Adventures Shop, 675 E Durant Ave, Aspen, +1 970 920 633, thelittlenell.com/occasions
Cloud Nine Alpine Bistro
76 Boomerang Rd, Aspen, +1 970 923 1227, aspensnowmass.com

Meat & Cheese

317 E Hopkins, Aspen, +1 970 710 7120, meatandcheeseaspen.com

DRINK

The Caribou Club

411 E Hopkins St, Aspen, +1 970 925 2929, caribouclub.com

Jimmy's Bodega 307 S Mill St, Aspen, +1 970 710 2182, jimmysbodega.com

DO

Aspen Art Museum

637 E Hyman Ave, Aspen, +1 970 925 8050, aspenartmuseum.org

Krabloonik Fine Dining & Dogsledding

4250 Divide Rd, Snowmass, +1 970 923 3953, krabloonik.com

Snowshoe Nature Tour

Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, +1 970 925 5756, aspensnowmass.com

T-Lazy-7 Ranch

3129 Maroon Creek Rd, Aspen, +1 970 925 4614, tlazy7.com

STAY

Hotel Jerome

330 E Main St, Aspen, +1 855 331 7213, hoteljerome.aubergeresorts.com

The Limelight Hotel

355 S Monarch St, Aspen, +1 970 925 3025, limelighthotel.com

The Little Nell

675 E Durant Ave, Aspen, +1 970 920 4600, thelittlenell.com

CRESTED BUTTE EAT

The Secret Stash Pizzeria

303 Elk Ave, Crested Butte, +1 970 349 6245, stashpizza.com

Uley's Cabin

Crested Butte Mountain, +1 877 547 5143, skicb.com/uleys

DRINK

Montanya Distillers

212 Elk Ave, Crested Butte, +1 970 799 3206, montanyarum.com

DO

Crested Butte Mountain

Heritage Museum

331 Elk Ave, Crested Butte, +1 970 349 1880, crestedbuttemuseum.com

STAY

Lodge at Mountaineer

Square 620 Gothic Rd, Crested Butte, +1 970 349 4000, skicb.com



mad about MUNICH

Is this Western Europe's most unlikely culinary capital?

Rob Ingram uncovers the best – and the wurst – of
dining and drinking in Munich. Prost!

PHOTOGRAPHY HELEN CATHCART



HAPPY HOUR

Tantris holds cult status at the top end of Munich's dining scene. Opposite: Hofbräuhaus patrons Helmut and Peter raise a jug at the world-famous beer hall.





MÜNCHNER BREAK

Clockwise from top left: Münchners at Viktualienmarkt, the central food market; luxury delicatessen and Munich institution, Dallmayr; radishes at Viktualienmarkt; schmalznudels being made at Café Frischhut; a pretzel-seller at Hofbräuhaus.

Paris has Fauchon, London has Fortnum & Mason, and Milan has Peck. In Munich, it's Dallmayr – as much a place of worship as the Gothic cathedral Frauenkirche that is Munich's dominating landmark.

Bavarians live for food. The main topic of conversation at mealtime is what they're going to eat at the next meal. And Dallmayr is where they go to seek inspiration, to give thanks and to keep dreams alive.

The inhabitants of Munich, my host tells me, are called Münchners. As a guest, I make no comment, but in the most surprising of culinary capitals, the main occupation certainly seems to be eating. It's a city noted for its robust economy and productivity, but at least half the populace seem to be on permanent lunch break – or is it munch break?

Food enjoyment is such a key ingredient in the Münchner make-up that in their minds they have created something called the "Weisswurst border". It's an imaginary border that separates Bavaria's culinary and cultural heartland from the rest of Germany.

The Weisswurst border takes its name from the distinctive white veal and herb sausages with which all Bavarians seem to start their day. In a diverse and vibrant culinary landscape, weisswurst and bitter beer remain the pillars of the border crossing. But there is a third element that defines the Bavarian attitude to eating and lifestyle in general. It is called *gemütlichkeit*, and it translates as something that is informal, casual, easy-going and laidback. Munich

yawns and stretches with *gemütlichkeit*. The quality of lifestyle is palpable here and, year after year, Germans vote Munich as the city in which they'd most like to live.

The paradox of the *gemütlichkeit* psyche is that while it embraces everything new and exciting, it also stubbornly defends the traditional. The best way to enter the spirit of the city is to join the Münchners in their veneration of the weisswurst. Münchners love nothing more than to dine outdoors. Even when the weather is bleak, they'll rug up and head to open-air markets, parks and beer gardens to graze from stalls and kiosks.

So we disregard the hotel's room-service breakfast menu and meet at the appointed (early) hour at the central food market – the Viktualienmarkt, behind St Peter's Church. Among the 140 produce stalls are food outlets that once just fed the marketeers but which have evolved into upmarket eating venues. At the famous soup kitchen that used to ply liver-dumpling soup to the market workers, today's dilemma is whether to try the truffled potato version or the carrot-coconut-ginger variety. But at whichever table you find a seat in the market grounds, there'll be a Münchner with weisswurst in a bun, either with sweet mustard and sauerkraut, or on a plate with a pretzel and a litre glass of beer.

But by now Dallmayr is open and we can elevate our expectations. Dallmayr doesn't look like Fauchon; it looks like one entire side of Place Vendôme. Inside, the elegance is breathtaking: the panelling is oak, the pillars are marble and the benches are velvet. Aside from the exotic food, confectionery, tea and coffee halls, there's Restaurant Dallmayr, the Lukullus Bar and Café-Bistro Dallmayr. The Café-Bistro offers a very nice breakfast of bread and croissants, baked ham, duck-liver cream, smoked salmon, shrimp in cocktail sauce, a jug of coffee or tea, and a glass of prosecco. Its patrons are dining with an obvious relish (although there is also a less obvious papaya and jalapeño one

available). We ask the bistro manager what the most popular breakfast choice is. With a shrug, he tells us it's the sausage – a duo of weisswurst with pretzels and wheat beer.

Café Frischhut, between the Viktualienmarkt and the Stadtmuseum, has the best endorsement – a queue stretching out the door. This is the spiritual home of another traditional Bavarian delicacy, schmalznudel. Dough stretched paper-thin is flash-fried into ethereal doughnut creations – you can watch yours being made – and there's something about the faces of the regulars that suggests schmalznudel is addictive. Great coffee here, too.

Tradition meets its dementia at the Hofbräuhaus, the world's most famous beer>

FARE FEST

Clockwise, from below: soup stall and smallgoods at Viktualienmarkt; Due Passi with its original 19th-century tiles.



MUNICH ON A MISSION

Clockwise, from below: Restaurant Garpunkt chef Stefan Lechner (left) and sommelier Nico Romano and their macadamia-crusted scallops in prawn broth; Café Tambosi. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Tantris chef Hans Haas; apple strudel at Café Tambosi; Hofbräuhaus; dazzling dining at Tantris.

hall. Over 400 years old, it comfortably seats more than 3000 drinkers – at least until the oompah band starts. At home, I am invisible to bar staff if there are more than half a dozen people at the bar. At the Hofbräuhaus, staff circulating with trays of one-litre mugs are by your side as soon as you reach the 300ml level. Bavarian food creates a terrible thirst and Bavarian beer creates a terrible hunger. After a morning satisfying the tooth, however, I can manage only a whole pickled pork knuckle boiled in a spicy broth and served on sauerkraut with fresh horseradish and a potato dumpling.

Schuhbeck's is an entire culinary empire created by Michelin-ranked celebrity chef Alfons Schuhbeck (he's also known as Alfons Beck, which just goes to show what a *gemütlichkeit* sort of chap he is).

His restaurants and food shops showcase grown-up Bavarian cuisine – the essence of Bavaria expressed with international influences and modern ingredients. Schuhbeck has described his cuisine as Bavarian, which is traditionally heavy, but “looking towards the sun and the south”. The menu at his signature restaurant, Südtiroler Stuben, ranges from baked calf's head on potato and chive sauce to alpine salmon with lavender salt on spinach with roasted coconut flakes, which suggests some movement in the right direction. His genius is more convincingly confirmed by a refreshing cucumber and dill creation from his ice-cream shop.

Happily, Münchners have embraced Mediterranean (or at least Italian) cuisine. Two of the most popular venues in the city are Due Passi and Café Tambosi, Due Passi for eating and Café Tambosi for seeing and being seen.

Due Passi is set in a former dairy and cheese shop dating back to the late 19th century and retains beautiful original tiles depicting rural scenes. The menu, too, respects the past, with pasta presented alla Emiliana (with ham, mushrooms and peas), alla puttanesca (with anchovies, capers and olives) and alla Piemontese (with mushrooms, Gorgonzola and truffle cream), all cooked with precision.

Café Tambosi, Munich's oldest continuously operating café, dates back to 1775. Mozart used to hang here and, while it's now a tourist magnet, the majority of its clientele are Germans nostalgically soaking up the old-world elegance of the place. There's a menu of the usual Italian suspects, but most people are here for coffee, cakes and confections.

At the top end of the Munich dining scene is the stunning Tantris, where Hans Haas guards the Michelin stars the restaurant has been amassing since 1973. Haas enjoys cult status in Germany (as does Tantris), the lapidary simplicity of his dishes having inspired critics to compare him with Picasso for his ability to remove all but the essential elements, then to make what's left dazzle. Lobster with pak choi and squid-ink gnocchi – a bargain at \$110. Tantris is notable, too, for its 51-page wine list.

But to revel in Munich's new adventurous cuisine, seek out the little bistro-style establishments around Glockenbachviertel and Schlachthofviertel, not far from Marienplatz, or at Regerplatz, where Restaurant Garpunkt is setting the pace. Here chef Stefan Lechner and sommelier Nico Romano present a knock-out tasting menu of five courses, such as scallops with a macadamia crust in prawn broth, followed by roasted foie gras with beetroot, apple and Calvados, then crisp duck with ginger, carrot and wild rice coleslaw. Munich has clearly broken the shackles of tradition here. Each dish comes with a glass of wine carefully matched by sommelier Romano. “Wines that arouse the emotions”, the menu states. And true enough, we leave feeling just a little emotional. ●





THE FINE PRINT

GETTING THERE

Qantas operates daily services from Sydney and Melbourne to Dubai, with onwards connections to Munich with partner Emirates. Customers can connect from all other Australian capital cities to the Sydney or Melbourne service. qantas.com

Café Frischhut

Prälat-Zisl-Strasse 8,
+49 89 268237

Café Tambosi

Odeonsplatz
18, +49 89 298322,
tambosi.de

Dallmayr

Dienerstrasse
14-15, +49 89 2135110,
dallmayr.com

Due Passi

Ledererstrasse
11, +49 89 224271,
bistroduepassi.wordpress.com

Hofbräuhaus

Platzl 9,
+49 89 290136-10,
hofbraeuhaus.de

Restaurant Garpunkt

Regerplatz 3,
+49 89 44449940,
restaurant-gar.de

Schuhbeck's

Platzl 6-8,
+49 89 216690 112,
schuhbeck.de

Tantris

Johann-Fichte-
Strasse 7, +49 89 3619590,
tantris.de

Viktualienmarkt

Off
Marienplatz, behind St
Peter's Church

Critics *compare Haas with Picasso* for his ability to remove all but the essential elements, then to make what's left dazzle.



HALCYON DAYS

A love of food, travel and laid-back luxury have come together at Halcyon House, a chic new boutique hotel born out of a retro surf motel on the northern New South Wales coast.

WORDS KRISHNA MATHRUBUTHAM PHOTOGRAPHY KARA ROSENLUND



Take an old 1960s surf motel on the far north coast of New South Wales, fill it with treasures unearthed the world over and a restaurant headed by one of the country's most exciting young chefs, and you have Australia's most chic new boutique hotel. It's also a labour of love. Halcyon House is the manifestation of a lifelong fondness for the small coastal town of Cabarita and its surrounds held by two couples. Sisters Siobhan and Elisha Bickle, and their husbands, Adam Flaskas and David Wadley, saw potential in the old Hideaway Motel, but originally for a different purpose.

"We've been holidaying and surfing there for over 20 years," says Siobhan. "The region is a little pocket of paradise. We'd always loved the property, and the initial plan was to buy it as a beach house for our growing families." Understandable, since between them they number 13.

But for a family rooted in hospitality and property development, and with Siobhan's preoccupation with fossicking for beautiful things, it could be said that Halcyon House was predestined. "We saw value in an opportunity for a unique boutique beach hotel in Australia," says Siobhan. "We also love to travel and we were inspired by the idea of intimate, relaxed luxury."

And it's perfectly pitched. The hotel sits just back from the pumping Cabarita Beach point break, screened by a row of majestic pandanus. It's just 40 minutes' drive north of Byron Bay, and such notable dining destinations as Fleet and Three Blue Ducks at The Farm, and less than half an hour's drive south from Gold Coast Airport.

Between Coolangatta and Cabarita, there's no shortage of holiday accommodation, but on arriving in the sleepy surf village of Cabarita, the sight of the pristine white structure of Halcyon House is most unexpected. The property is so strikingly at odds with the suburban surrounds, it transports you to Mediterranean shores.



Inside the 21 rooms, which include a pair of two-bedroom suites, there has been no compromise on design or luxury. The work of Brisbane interior designer Anna Spiro of Black & Spiro, each has walls padded and lined with elaborate patterned textiles in blue, white and earthy hues, inspired by the fabric walls in London's Ham Yard Hotel, where Siobhan and Adam had stayed.

The brief for Spiro was "to bring back to life the nostalgic feeling of the old Australian beach motel in a modern-day format", says Siobhan. "We wanted it to exude a luxurious, but low-key Australian feel that was whimsical rather than formal, and to curate an eclectic collection of antiques, furniture and art that>

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

Clockwise from above: artworks, including the print *Sea Weed* by Wayne Pate, on the fabric wall of a Master Room; a prawn sandwich at Paper Daisy, and chef Ben Devlin. Opposite: Norries Headland juts out from the Cabarita coastline.

OUT TO SEA

Clockwise from right: balconies at Halcyon House overlook the ocean; the lounge area in Paper Daisy; complimentary bikes.



will grow and stay within the walls of Halcyon House for years to come.” And so, in pursuit of this vision, an 18-month-long, multimillion-dollar labour of love began, gutting, rebuilding and refurbishing the former motel bought four years ago.

Sumptuousness is key: the huge bedheads of the king beds are dressed in brightly patterned fabrics that contrast pleasingly with the walls. Large dark-blue denim tapestries form feature walls, while found artworks from the markets of Massachusetts hang salon-style above individual writing tables, alongside commissioned artworks by New York illustrator Wayne Pate. From Spiro’s bespoke sofas in custom textiles to vintage lamps and accessories, everything is oversized, built to envelop guests in luxury, not least of all the freestanding bathtub which, when you’re soaking neck-deep still isn’t full.

With a desire to hark back to youthful days “when there were no rules”, the couples have created a relaxed destination and base from where the region can be explored and enjoyed at leisure. A hike along the





“We hope to be a good representation of the area, be it through the *ideas behind the food* or the products we’re using.”

rugged coastline to Norries Headland through littoral rainforest begins at the hotel’s doorstep, while you can take one of the complimentary bicycles to Kingscliff, a pleasant nine-and-a-half-kilometre ride away (wild dogs notwithstanding) on a flat dedicated track that runs parallel to the ocean.

The region is a focal point of a stay at Halcyon House, especially in the property’s restaurant, Paper Daisy (named after the flower populating the nearby headland), which opens onto the pool area and looks out to the breakers beyond the pandanus.

Head chef Ben Devlin, an alumnus of Noma and Esquire, quietly promotes a strong regional focus in his menu of light, accessible yet cleverly conceived dishes designed to share for long, lazy feasts with friends and plenty of wine.

“We hope to be a good representation of the area,” says Devlin, “be it through the ideas behind the food or the products we’re using. We’re in a pretty special area, and we want people to feel an attachment to our surroundings.”

A case in point is a plate of pipis steamed with lemon myrtle and beach plants, served with housemade wattleseed and honey sourdough. “The traditional name for this area translates to ‘place of many pipis’,” says Devlin, “so we have a dish of local pipis. Or there’s a dessert based on the idea of some of the great imported ingredients that grow so well in this area: a smoked custard of Tweed Valley vanilla with candied olives and Buddha’s hand.”

Devlin was a latecomer to the piece. His engagement fell at a timely juncture in his career, and it’s been a “life-changing” decision for the chef. “It has been a learning curve to design food that’s more relaxed and coastal than progressive and exclusive,” he says. “And there are a lot more elements to this than anything else I’ve done – not just lunch and dinner, but in-room, overnight, breakfast and everything else. Plus now, instead of skateboarding to work in the city, I might be able to surf out the front of the hotel before work.”

A kitchen garden in the hotel’s forecourt is in its infancy, but plans are afoot to extend it to increase the amount of home-grown produce. “We’re working on our produce and getting as much control over what we can grow at the hotel,” says Devlin, “and I’m excited to see how we can make better connections with the people involved in providing us with the amazing things we have been using.”

Amplifying the luxe factor is the newly renovated day spa, the interior of which also received Spiro’s deft touch, and staff that genuinely strive to make your stay as idyllic and relaxed as the hotel’s name would suggest.

“You can build a beautiful hotel,” says Siobhan, who gathered the crew specifically for their enthusiasm for the region and the business of hospitality, “but you have nothing without passionate staff.”

Rooms from \$550 per night. Halcyon House, 21 Cypress Cres, Cabarita Beach, NSW, (02) 6676 1444, halcyonhouse.com.au ●

SWELL PARTY

Above, from left: Cabarita offers a popular point break; a Superior Room at Halcyon House.



Sasa-zushi, Niigata

WINTER FEATS & FEASTS IN JAPAN

Open your eyes to the winter wonderland of Japan
– where your sense of adventure will always be rewarded.

At the height of winter in Australia, when the air is crisp and chill, it's the perfect time to plan a white Christmas getaway. And no one does winter quite like Japan. Whether you're ploughing through powder at one of its 500-plus ski resorts, or soaking in a steaming onsen, you'll be continually amazed by how much there is to experience.

The most exciting element is Japan's regional diversity. When you've explored the neon-lined streets of Tokyo, with its intoxicating array of restaurants and bars, why not jump on the

shinkansen (bullet train) to Niigata or Nagano in the Japanese Alps. After a day on the slopes you can savour two of its famous local dishes: sasa-zushi (sushi served on a bamboo leaf) and shinshu-soba (buckwheat noodles from Nagano prefecture). Or fly to the northern island of Hokkaido, to carve up the ski runs of Niseko and Furano. The Sapporo Snow Festival in February is also a highlight. While you're there, you simply have to experience the ishikari-nabe (salmon hotpot).

Winter is truly a very special time to visit Japan.



Shinshu-soba, Nagano



Show resort, Hokkaido



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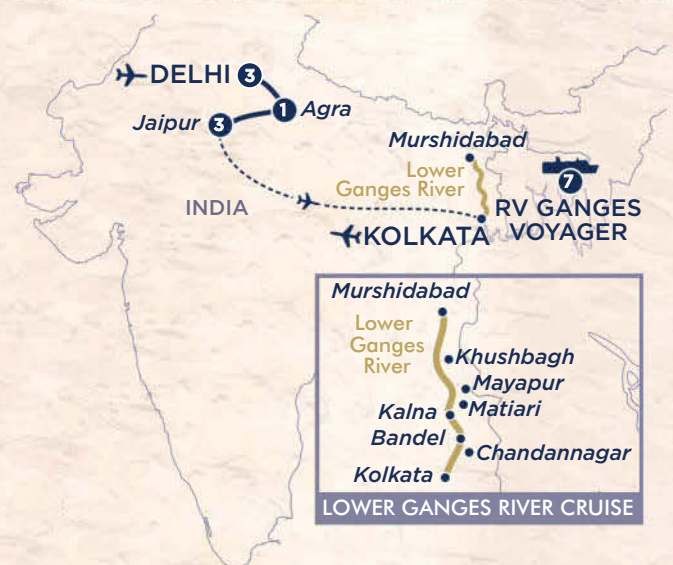
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APPS TO GO

Need to make travel plans fast? The new Hotel Tonight and Luxe City Guides apps from the Apple App Store and Google Play can help. Hotel Tonight is a mobile-only booking app selling last-minute hotel rooms at heavily discounted rates. It's categorised from basic to luxe and has geo-tagging for location-specific rates. Luxe's first digital city guide includes 25 cities to download. The content is snappy, with insider suggestions of where to eat, sleep and play, and you can use it offline, so no need for WiFi or roaming charges. *Hotel Tonight*, free; *Luxe City Guides*, \$12.99. MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



G-ROUGH, ROME

Living Rough in Rome

Rome's newest boutique hotel delivers luxury with a funky edge. G-Rough, housed in a 15th-century building, has 10 individual suites, some overlooking the picturesque Pasquino Piazza. Twenty contemporary artists were commissioned to create unique pieces for the property and they sit alongside colourful furniture from renowned Italian designers such as Ico Parisi, Giò Ponti, Guglielmo Ulrich and Seguso. Like its sister property in Venice, PalazzinaG, which attracts the Hollywood A-list, it offers guests discreet service. Breakfast and a lifestyle manager or virtual butler is also available. Rooms start from \$414. designhotels.com JO McKENNA

PHOTOGRAPHY SERENA ELLER (G-ROUGH)



EDUARDO PAOLOZZI'S
VULCAN AND
SENSATION BY DAMIEN
HIRST (INSET).

NEW EXHIBIT

Walk The Line

An innovative new sculpture trail in London showcases hidden art.

There's no shortage of world-class art experiences to be enjoyed in London, but The Line offers something most other institutions can't – an outdoor setting. London's first contemporary art walk, running from Greenwich to Stratford, is led by urban regeneration expert Clive Dutton and art dealer Megan Piper. The recently opened sculpture walk aims to bring artworks out of storage and in front of the public. "I have a personal fascination with the amount of artwork that exists and is squirreled away in storage, hidden from public view," says Piper. "I wanted to come up with a way of presenting it all." The project won influential supporters from the outset, including photographer



David Bailey and Turner Prize-winning artist Mark Wallinger, and was largely crowdfunded, raising more than \$288,200. The Line will initially feature works by the likes of Damien Hirst, Martin Creed, Gary Hume and Eduardo Paolozzi, and will be continually updated. Linking The O2 arena in Greenwich to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford, the route broadly follows the line of the Meridian and takes around three hours to complete on foot – just remember to enjoy the new arty view. the-line.org DOMINIQUE AFACAN

TASTE MALAYSIA Join GT Asia expert Tony Tan on his food tour through Malaysia starting 4 September. From Kuala Lumpur to historic George Town, Tan is looking forward to sharing the food of his homeland over 12 days. Laksa, rendang and roti are just the beginning. tonytan.com.au



THE MOZART EFFECT

A quartet from the Sydney Symphony Orchestra will perform live on board a number of APT's 15-day Magnificent Europe itineraries, starting in March 2016. The musicians will perform on six river cruise departures on the Amsterdam to Budapest itinerary, which, keeping with the theme, includes excursions to Salzburg (Mozart's birthplace), the Hungarian Opera House and a concert Vienna's City Palace. aptouring.com.au

FULL OF VEUE

Ponant is upping the ante with an exclusive partnership with Veuve Clicquot. While the French fizz is already served

aboard the five Ponant ships, *Le Lyrial* will be the first to host the new Veuve Clicquot corner: a specialty lounge serving an even greater selection of the Champagne house's premium drops, including Brut Carte Jaune Clicquot and La Grande Dame. en.ponant.com

VAMOS A MOVIDA!

MoVida chef Frank Camorra will host a six-night pop-up restaurant, MoVida Afloat, on board the privately chartered Captain's Choice rivership *MS AmaPrima* in April 2016. Camorra will serve MoVida favourites from an intimate 27-seat chef's table as part of the "Springtime on the Western Front" itinerary that travels between France, the Netherlands and Belgium over 17 days. Joining him will be friend and GT contributor Richard Cornish, who will act as

tour guide in Bruges.

captainschoice.com.au

UNFORGETTABLE

Natalie Cole will headline Cunard's first Blue Note jazz-themed transatlantic crossing from New York to Southampton on the *Queen Mary 2* in October 2015. Loose lips sink ships? Not this time. cunard.com

DO AS THE LOCALS DO

A new dining program from boutique cruise line Azamara will encourage guests to try the local cuisine at ports of call. Azamara has curated a packed list, launched this European summer, of 35 restaurants across 27 European ports – including Barcelona, Sorrento and the Canary Islands. Cruisers can stay and "eat local" after on-shore excursions; Azamara will also arrange cars for independent exploring. azamaracruises.com/en-au



HOTEL GUIDE READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Tina Kelsey from McDowall, Qld, is the winner of our 2015 Hotel Guide Readers' Choice Awards competition and will be on her way to London, thanks to Mr & Mrs Smith and British Airways. Our runner-up prize, a Nespresso Lattissima Touch, was taken home by Gary Freak from Port Pirie, SA. And congratulations to the Park Hyatt Sydney, voted Best City Hotel. For a full list of winners, head to our Travel News section at gourmettraveller.com.au.

Best by spa

Regular jet bath or healing waters? This is the reality when booking a room at the new Gainsborough Bath Spa in the UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath. The 99-room hotel, which opened last month, is the first and only hotel in the United Kingdom to offer guests in-room access to the spa-town's thermal waters – available in the Gainsborough Suite and two additional spa rooms. All rooms feature Georgian accents, while 17,000 ancient coins uncovered during early site excavations are on display in reception. Naturally, guests will also have access to the hotel's adjoining Spa Village, comprising relaxation rooms, ice alcove, steam room, sauna, three thermal pools and an Aroma Bar where guests can custom-blend their own oils. Nightly room-only rates start from \$700. *The Gainsborough Bath Spa, Beau St, Bath, +44 (0) 1225 358 888; gainsboroughbathspa.co.uk* MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



THE GAINSBOROUGH BATH SPA POOL



August IS A GREAT MONTH TO...

Dry July is over and the fourth annual **Pinot Palooza** is a great place to crack the first bottle. The wine festival opens in Perth (1 August), before touring to Adelaide (8 August) and the east coast in October. **Martin Boetz** (Cooks Co-Op) and **Giovanni Pili** (Pili at Freshwater) join forces with friend and fellow chef **Alessandro Pavoni** for the third **Beach to the Bush** dinner at Ormeau at the Spit

in Sydney (3 August). Two thousand Indigenous artists across the Top End participate in the **Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair** (7-9 August). Sotheby's will auction Australian artist Jeffrey Smart's oil painting *Morning Practice, Baia* (1969) at its **Important Australian Art Auction** (25 August). The five-course **Louis Roederer Champagne Dinner** (29 August) at New Zealand's Huka Lodge will have Brisbane's Ryan Squires (Esquire) working the pans. Highlights at the **Sydney Italian Wine + Food Festival** (30 August) include masterclasses by Federico Zanellato (LuMi Bar & Dining) and GT wine expert Max Allen.

FACE FIRST The new Mecca Cosmetics Jet Set Travel Collection covers all your travel-beauty needs in one neat carry-all: lip protectant, sunscreen, make-up remover, wash cloth, skin primer and eye-brightening pen, all for \$110. Genius. mecca.com.au





PARIS AND GRASSE

SASKIA HAVEKES

Florist

"When I travel, it clears space for new inspiration. In the mundanity of the working week, when I'm doing events or running

the shop, there are parts of my creativity that get stifled, and when I travel, it really unlocks that.

"I did an amazing trip a couple of years ago to Grasse and Paris to launch our first fragrance, Magnolia Grandiflora Sandrine. In Paris, we had a launch in a beautiful Jacques Grange-designed apartment in Place de Vosges, which blew my mind. I couldn't believe how incredibly beautiful it was. It had amazing light, high ceilings, and a brilliant contrast in furnishings and colours.

"We went to the flower market in Paris, and bought grasses, moss, rambling roses, alliums, honesty, trailing

amaranthus, peonies and herbs, then filled the main areas of the apartment with installations.

"I had never been to Grasse, considered the perfume capital of the world. The weather was stunning, there was lots of wisteria and the gardens were blooming.

"The chance to talk to the people who create these incredible perfumes was wonderful."

The chance to talk to the people who create these incredible perfumes – and spend time in their gardens – was wonderful.

"At a beautiful old barn built out of stone and concrete, workers had big hessian bags full of rose petals, which



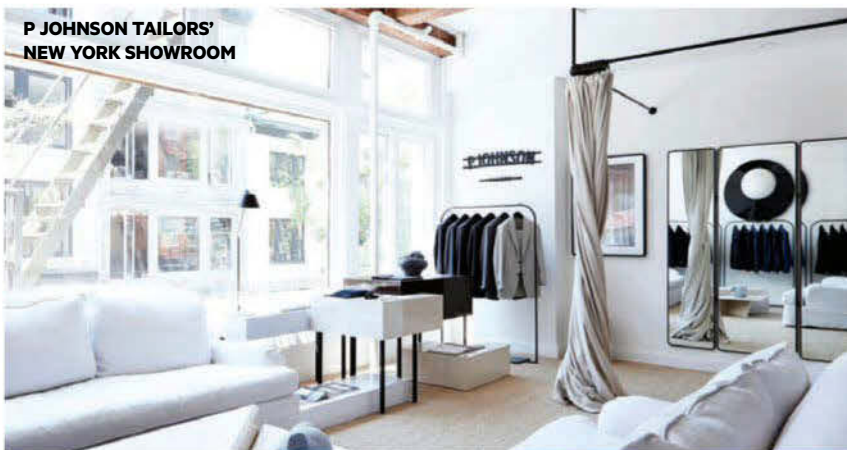
ROSES FOR THE PERFUME FACTORIES IN GRASSE

they picked in such an old-fashioned way; they wore big aprons made out of plastic bags, tied at the sides, and they picked handfuls of roses and put them into the bags. I was taken aback by how simple it was.

"A real high point for me was being shown a

patch of lily of the valley which Christian Dior knelt at and smelt to create Diorissimo. It was an emotional moment for me. The day was crisp and clear and it was totally euphoric." *Saskia Havekes is a Nespresso brand ambassador.*

P JOHNSON TAILORS' NEW YORK SHOWROOM



Tailors suit New York

New York has recently received the first Australian brand for the sharp-dressed man.

P Johnson Tailors has opened for business in New York, making it the first Australian menswear brand to open in the Big Apple. "We have been coming to see clients in North America for two years now and it has always been our idea to open a permanent showroom to better service them," says founder Patrick Johnson. The elegant, airy space is one level up on the corner of Spring and Wooster streets in Soho, New York. pjt.com

VANITY CASE SPRITZ ON THE MOVE

Small and perfectly formed for freshness on the go, these fragrances were born to roam.

1 John Varvatos Artisan Acqua Eau de Toilette, \$55 for 40ml. davidjones.com.au

2 Chanel Bleu de Chanel Eau de Toilette Refillable Travel Spray for men, \$103 (includes two 20ml refills). davidjones.com.au

3 Le Labo Rose 31 Liquid Balm roll-on, \$112. mecca.com.au

4 Byredo Parfums Roll On Oil Gypsy Water, \$85. mecca.com.au

5 Bottega Veneta Eau de Parfum Travel Spray, \$150 for 75ml. davidjones.com.au





BY CLIVE
DORMAN



"Customers might book a business class seat, but opt out of the miles or lounge access. Or they could take a day flight in economy [from Kuala Lumpur] to Australia and return in business overnight. Our current systems cannot deliver that."

Mueller, 52, comes to Malaysia Airlines with a raft of aviation experience, including the top jobs at Ireland's Aer Lingus and Belgium's Sabena. He has hit the ground running at the airline's HQ in

with optional frills and a full-service international network.

In other words, if you just want a comfy business-class seat, you'll be able to get it at a discounted rate if you opt out of fringe benefits like lounge access and frequent-flyer points, which are among the most expensive customer service outlays for the airline.

To rebuild the airline following the 2014 tragedies, Mueller will also rebrand with a new marketing identity, revamp

to the entire industry and if we then add a superior catering concept, superior in-flight entertainment and a world-class lay-flat seat, I think we are in [contention] again to get that [Skytrax] award back."

Mueller says the airline's frequent-flyer program needs to be fully integrated with its revenue management system so that frequent-flyer miles "become a currency that you can use on your hand-held device if you go to Starbucks in the United States", for example.

"First we have to stop the bleeding," Mueller says. "The second phase is really the long march. More than 40 projects have been identified... these are process re-engineering projects, involving IT in most of the cases."

It's been a baptism of fire for the new chief executive, who has also been forced to sack nearly a third of the airline's 20,000 staff and target a reduction in operating costs of 20 per cent because "our unit costs are approximately

Mueller's plan to resuscitate Malaysia Airlines would see it become a "value carrier" that will offer optional high-end services.

Malaysia Airlines' new chief executive officer, Christoph Mueller, is set to rebuild the airline with a radical new product offering.

Mueller is planning a major investment in the company's IT systems to allow the airline to "unbundle" product packages. "We want to go modular so people can build their own product," Mueller told aviation reporters at the International Air Transport Association's annual meeting in Miami recently.

Kuala Lumpur with a firm focus on technological changes, which are sweeping the industry.

Mueller's plan to resuscitate Malaysia Airlines would see it become a "value carrier" that offers a basic product and optional high-end services – similar to the "new world airline" strategy adopted by Virgin Australia co-founder Brett Godfrey in 2009, when he transitioned the former Virgin Blue from backpacker budget airline to quality carrier

its business-class and in-flight entertainment service, and offer a new onboard food service.

Mueller says business class will "be equipped with totally lay-flat beds of very large dimensions so that we finish up with a product that can be positioned above the industry standard".

He's also reviewing the airline's catering. "We have done five-star and we can do it again," he says. "Our flight attendants are really superior in comparison

"That is my vision of how you deal with miles in the future, whether to pay for an upgrade at the check-in counter or to purchase duty-free goods onboard our aircraft... All that should happen via the currency of points."

The new branding, to be revealed in September, is a tightly held secret as Mueller and his management team undertake research with customers, suppliers and focus groups about what a revamped Malaysia Airlines might look like.

20 per cent above the level where they should be".

There won't be any splurging on new planes, like the A380 superjumbo, which the airline is having trouble filling – two of which are now for sale as a result.

"I believe, here in the Asia-Pacific, there is a little bit of an obsession that your entire fleet has to be below five years old because that saves money on [maintenance]," Mueller says.

"That is not how I do my business." ●



ITALIAN STYLE

Alitalia has unveiled its "revitalised" cabins on the Abu Dhabi to Venice route before rolling them out across the fleet. The carrier's new A330s feature wood panelling, bright leathers and fabrics that channel Italy's fashion cred. Seats in all

classes offer a USB port, power socket, Frette bedding and entertainment on demand. In business class there's Poltrona Frau leather seats and Ferragamo amenity kits. Alitalia has also overhauled catering (with espresso on demand). alitalia.com

BIRTHDAY SUIT

Singapore Airlines' also has a new look. To mark its golden jubilee, the carrier's gone all patriotic, covering two of its A380s in a 10-metre high,



47-metre-long Singaporean flag design. Look out for the bold branding on flights to and from Sydney. singaporeair.com

LOUNGE PASS

Air New Zealand will offer premium economy seating on its trans-Tasman routes out of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane from October. Flyers get more space, better food, extra baggage allowance, priority boarding and lounge access. airnewzealand.com.au

IN THE BAG GROOM TO MOVE

Keep on-the-go grooming essentials neatly packed in a toiletry bag so chic, you'll want to carry it out.

1 **Dior Homme** leather pouch, \$1750. (02) 9229 4600

2 **Valentino** "Rockstud" washbag, \$405.
matchesfashion.com

3 **Country Road** leather wetpack, \$99.95.
countryroad.com.au

4 **Louis Vuitton** toiletry kit, \$735. louisvuitton.com

5 **Mulberry** leather make-up case, \$500. mulberry.com



NEW EMPORIUM

Savoir fare

France's finest producers are showcased at La Maison Plisson.

Man cannot live on Poilâne sourdough alone and now Parisians won't need to with the opening of the French capital's newest food emporium, La Maison Plisson. Located on Boulevard Beaumarchais, this two-story épicerie and restaurant was crowned a Right Bank establishment before its doors even opened recently, such was the hype surrounding its launch.

Founder Delphine Plisson, formerly head of marketing at French fashion brands Maje and Sandro, enlisted French chefs Bruno Doucet and the father of French bistronomy, Yves Camdeborde (of Saint Germain's Le Comptoir du Relais), as consultants to help her select and stock her shelves with the finest French food producers, be it olive oil, fruit-filled confitures, sardines, chocolates or an impressive wine selection. Then there's the cheese: creamy rounds of Saint-Félicien, hunks of Roquefort and slabs of Reblochon, the deli with its array of saucisson, duck terrine and more, and

a fresh fruit and vegetable market.

(In summer, look out for the ephemeral and sticky-sweet fraise des bois.)

Adjacent to this luxe grocery store is a 60-seat restaurant with a sprawling terrace. Fresh savoury tarts and sandwiches are on the menu, as well as a traditional dish of the day – free-range chicken and pea meatballs, say, served on bulgur with jus de viande and dill.

Most remarkably, La Maison Plisson is open seven days a week – a common convenience in Australia, but an anomaly in the French capital. 93 Blvd Beaumarchais, 75003 Paris, lamaisonplisson.com
ALICE CAVANAGH



POINTS IN TIME BaselWorld 2015 didn't disappoint with these fabulous new watch releases, including the Tag Heuer Carrer Calibre Heuer 01 Chronograph (\$6700), Rolex's Oyster Perpetual Yacht Master (\$14,350) and Rado's HyperChrome Automatic Diamonds (\$9125). Stockists p175.



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La Mulata

Popular with smart lunchtime crowds for its daily-changing set menu, La Mulata is a boisterous, happy place of Caribbean cuisine. The mulato (Afro-European) menu might include a biting prawn ceviche, a side dish of lentil soup and the rice dish arroz isleño. *Calle del Quero 9-58, lamulatacartagena.blogspot.com*

María

Gordon Ramsay alumnus Alejandro Ramírez is firing up the Centro Histórico with his see-and-be-seen seafood restaurant María.

Guests assemble in a decadent dining room beneath pineapple chandeliers and tiger murals to sample Ramírez's "honest cuisine" of cured salmon with jalapeño infusion and lobster sandwiches. *Centro Calle del Colegio 34-60, mariacartagena.com*

La Vitrola

Old Havana endures in this restaurant where tables and waitstaff are clad in crisp white. The menu offers a Harry's Bar carpaccio, traditional Cuban dishes and lavish seafood. It's a massive scene, sure, but you won't want to miss it. And don't forget the Panama. *Calle de Baloco 2-01, + 575 660 0711*



Charming Cartagena

With a vibrant cultural scene, buzzy bars, smart dining and glam hotels, no wonder Colombia's jewel is a jetsetter magnet, writes **Kendall Hill**.



CARTAGENA,
COLOMBIA

STAY

Tcherassi Hotel & Spa

Cartagena's most charming addresses are its mansion hotels nestled within the city walls. Casa San Agustín and Casa Pestagua are both gorgeous, but the most effortlessly glamorous is the Tcherassi Hotel & Spa. Colombian fashion designer Silvia Tcherassi has created an oasis of cool white with lush walls of tropical greenery and water, everywhere. Rooftop rooms with private pools are the pick of the seven guestrooms.

Calle Del Sargento Mayor 6-21, tcherassihotels.com

Anandá Hotel

The well-located Anandá is an old noble home accessed via a Judas gate from the street. Guests step into an exotic reception area leading to an internal courtyard shaded by an almond tree. The rooftop terrace is a gem with its garden lounges and pool. Luxury suites have balconies over the street, perfect for acting out Fermina Daza fantasies. *Calle del Cuartel 36-77, anandacartagena.com*

DRINK

Demente

This fabulously bohemian bar on buzzy Trinidad Square is the archetype of Getsemaní's new cool. Owner Nicolas Wiesner has furnished an ancient house with rocking chairs (symbolic of the neighbourhood), rare tunes, groaning shelves of wine and liquor and a tapas menu of albondigas (meatballs), crab dumplings and burrata salad. There's a lot to go crazy about at Demente. *Plaza Trinidad, Getsemaní*

Café Havana

You must remember that photo of Hillary Clinton dancing at Cartagena's house of salsa (some things you just can't unsee). Trust me, you'll look a lot cooler than the former Secretary of State when you hit the floor at Café Havana's big-band dance hall. Don't worry if you can't salsa; just feel the rhythm. Rum helps. *Esquina Media Luna, Carrera 10, Getsemaní, cafehavanacartagena.com*

El Barón

This stylish café-bar on stately Plaza de San Pedro Claver does excellent espresso (courtesy of a \$13,000 custom La Marzocco machine) and a kicking chilli-salt Margarita. *Plaza de San Pedro Claver, elbaron.co*

SHOP

Names such as Salvatore Ferragamo, Desigual and Michael Kors have outlets in the walled city to cater to the new jetset (Cartagena's only a 4.5-hour flight from New York after all). But for unique mementoes make a pilgrimage to St Dom, a boutique-cum-gallery with captivating Colombian fashion, art and design. *Calle Santo Domingo 33-70, stdom.co*

PHOTOGRAPHY ALAMY

INSIDER TIPS

DON'T MISS

The once-dangerous area of Getsemaní is the city's most energetic quarter.

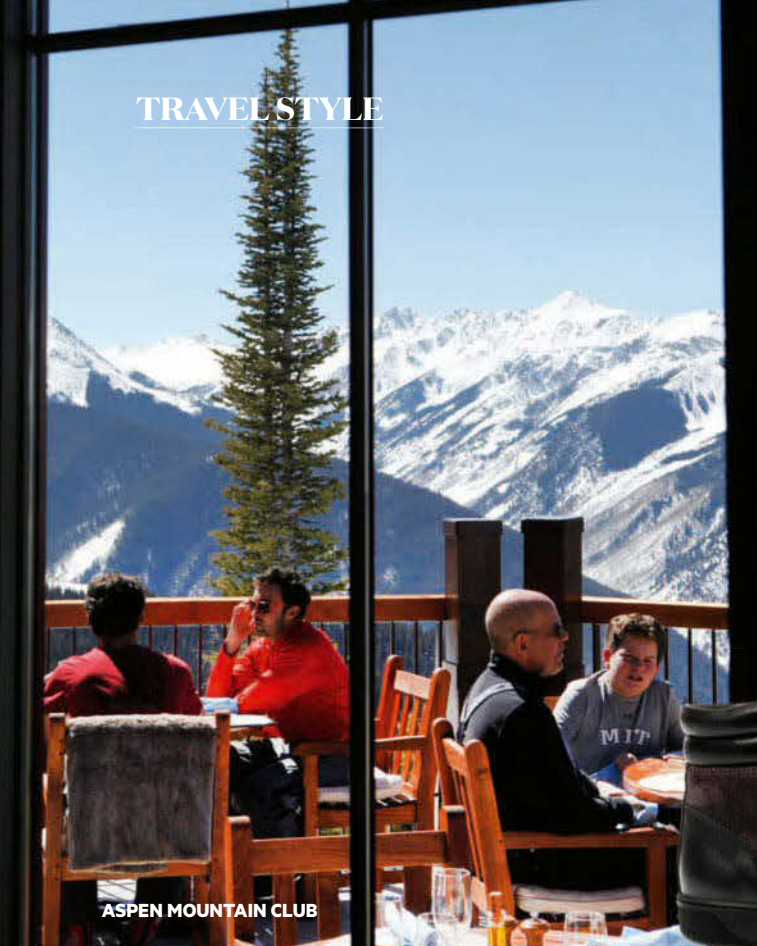
Its film-set charm embraces street art (along Calle de la Sierpe), dreamy hotels, an emerging bar and restaurant scene and the nightly barrio party on Trinidad Square.

INSIDER TIP

The Café del Mar atop the city walls is a popular gathering spot but it's not the Café del Mar of Ibiza and chillout CD fame. It's pleasant enough for a watery Margarita sundowner, but don't expect a super-cool scene (facebook.com/cafedelmarcartagena). ●

GETTING THERE LAN Airlines flies daily from Sydney to Santiago, Chile, via Auckland, while codeshare partner Qantas has four direct flights a week, with onward LAN connections to Cartagena via Bogotá. Call 1800 126 038 or visit lan.com.





Powder dressing

Cut a dash on the slopes with voguish pieces that take you from piste to après-ski in style.

1 Fendi "Creatures" ski jacket, \$1734, from Net-a-Porter.

2 Louis Vuitton Tambour Twin Chrono Grand Sport watch, \$85,000. **3** Lacroix stretch-shell ski pants, \$796.70, from Net-a-Porter.

4 Moncler "New Bordeaux" suede and fur trainers, \$633, from Matches Fashion. **5** Chanel skis, \$4800. **6** Obermeyer "Sunday" beanie, \$26, from ShopStyle. **7** Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream Skin Protectant, \$25 for 50ml, from David Jones.

8 Gucci "Intarsia" knitted vest, 874, from Net-a-Porter (US). **9** Saint Laurent leopard-print cashmere and silk-blend scarf, \$968, from Net-a-Porter.com.

10 Liquid Image Model 350 OPS Snow Goggle, \$65, from Liquid Image. **11** Dale of Norway "Alpina" sweater, \$390, from Backcountry.

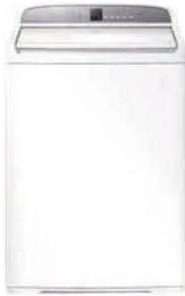
12 Chanel lambskin, wool and mohair gloves, \$1590.



Gourmet shopping

They're the flavours of the month, so put these items at the top of your wish list.

1



Harvey Norman The Fisher & Paykel 10kg WashSmart washing machine features innovative load-sensing technology, auto water-level functionality and three spin speeds for optimal results. Priced \$1129. harveynorman.com.au

2



Vitamix The new Vitamix S30 might be compact, but it offers powerful, high-performance technology with the convenience of a standard blender in a single serve. Priced \$845 for standard colours; \$895 for stainless steel. vitamix.com.au

3



Raymond Weil The new Raymond Weil ladies Toccata watch features a 34mm stainless steel case, diamond-set dial and bezel, and elegantly fits the wrist with a satin strap. Priced \$3100. (02) 9363 1088, raymond-weil.com

4



Scenic Tours Cruise Europe's waterways from Amsterdam to Budapest on board a Scenic Space-Ship and encounter the best that Europe has to offer. From \$7295 per person, twin share. 138 128, scenic.com.au

5



Domayne Constructed from mild steel, the vibrant turquoise colour and distinct hexagonal shapes on the "Structure" pendant light create a richly textured look. It's a beautiful interplay of style and texture. Priced \$169. domayne.com.au

6



Nespresso Enhance your morning ritual, whatever it may be, with the selection of popular Grands Crus included in the Nespresso 5-Sleeve Breakfast Assortment. Available at Nespresso boutiques. 1800 623 033, nespresso.com

7



Tefal Renowned for its patented Thermo-Spot, Tefal's innovative heat indicator lets you know when your pan is preheated and ready to start cooking, so you get perfect cooking results every time. tefal.com.au

8



Miele The CVA 6800 built-in coffee machine by Miele features a host of remarkably intuitive features to deliver superb coffee with unprecedented convenience. Priced \$5899. 1300 464 353, miele.com.au

9



Sugars of the World CSR Sugar has sourced a range of exotic and artisanal sugars from around the globe for Australian tables. The range celebrates the traditional origins and unique flavour profiles of each one. sugarsoftheworld.com

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NEXT MONTH

September

Hold onto your spatula – it's the restaurant issue!
Get ready for a month of wild and fanciful food fun and our annual restaurant guide.

FOOD

The new Italian

Mix Italian tradition and Australian innovation in equal parts, and prepare to be dazzled by exciting new-style flavour sensations.

April Bloomfield eats her vegetables

The Spotted Pig chef might have made her reputation in New York with all things meaty, but she's just as adept with the greens.

Grilled greens

Speaking of greens, spring is the perfect time to delve into the bittersweet world of charred leaves. Our grilled Caesar is just the beginning.

Danielle Alvarez: the next big thing

Australia gets its own taste of Chez Panisse as chef Danielle Alvarez opens her produce-centric Sydney eatery, and we've got a tasty preview.

TRAVEL

Animal magic

Norman Carr Safaris' new Chinzombo bush camp offers a Zambian safari experience as luxurious as it is authentic.

Book Brisbane

With our nation's major cities enjoying record hotel occupancy rates, it's Brisbane that's blazing ahead at the upper end.

Making tracks

We travel along British Columbia's Fraser River onboard the *Rocky Mountaineer* for a breathtakingly scenic train journey like no other.

Las Vegas story

With intimate new hotels, decadent spas, and top-notch dining and shopping options, Sin City is showing its cultured side.

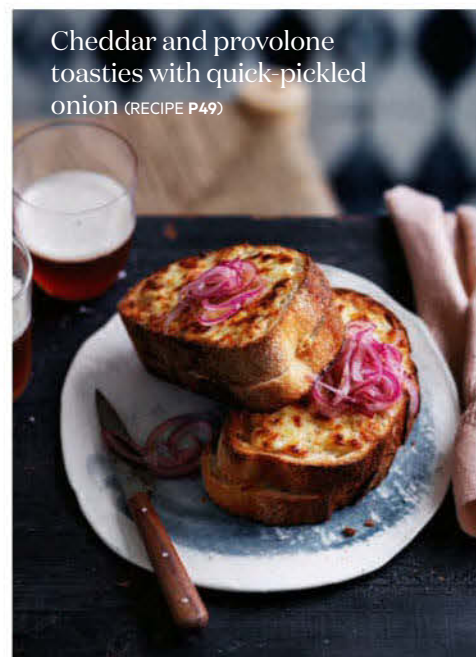
ON SALE 20 AUGUST



Grilled chard stems



Pumpkin ravioli
with sage (RECIPE P106)



Cheddar and provolone
toasties with quick-pickled
onion (RECIPE P49)

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armadillo-co.com
Backcountry backcountry.com
Becker Minty (02) 8356 9999, beckerminty.com
Bison Australia (02) 6257 7255, bisonhome.com
Chanel 1300 242 635, chanel.com
Chef and the Cook (02) 8004 6085,
chefandthecook.com.au
Chef's Armoury (02) 9699 2353,
chefsarmoury.com
Chinaclay chinaclay.com.au
Chuchu chuchu.net.au
Citta Design 1800 256 723, cittadesign.com
Claypool claypool.com.au
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GUIDE TO SYMBOLS

S SIMPLE **G** GLUTEN-FREE
V VEGETARIAN
A CAN BE PREPARED AHEAD

COOK'S NOTES

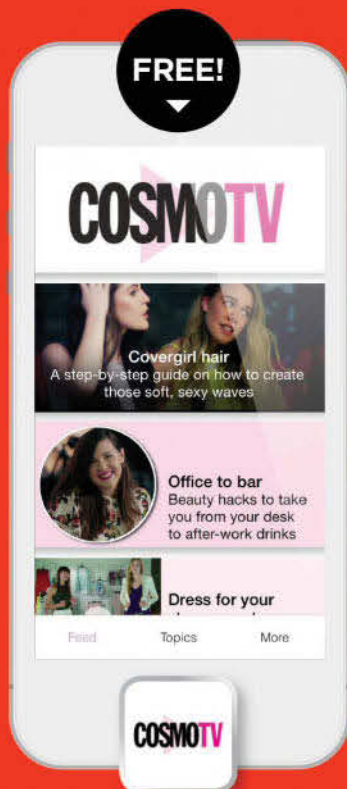
MEASURES & EQUIPMENT

- * All cup and spoon measures are level and based on Australian metric measures.
- * Eggs have an average weight of 59gm unless otherwise specified.
- * Fruit and vegetables are washed, peeled and medium-sized unless otherwise specified.
- * Oven temperatures are for conventional ovens and need to be adjusted for fan-forced ovens.
- * Pans are medium-sized and heavy-based; cake tins are stainless steel, unless otherwise specified.

COOKING TIPS

- * When seasoning food to taste, we use sea salt and freshly ground pepper unless otherwise specified.
- * To blanch an ingredient, cook it briefly in boiling water, then drain it. To refresh it, plunge it in plenty of iced water (this stops the cooking process), then drain it.
- * We recommend using free-range eggs, chicken and pork. We use female pork for preference.
- * To dry-roast spices, cook the spices in a dry pan, stirring continuously over medium-high heat until they're fragrant. The cooking time varies depending on the spices used.

- * RSPCA Australia's recommendations for killing crustaceans humanely are to first render the animals insensible by placing them in the freezer (under 4C – signs of insensibility are when the tail or outer mouth parts can be moved without resistance); crustaceans must then be killed quickly by cutting through the centreline of the head and thorax with a knife. For crabs, insert a knife into the head. This splitting and spiking destroys the nerve centres of the animal.
- * All herbs are fresh, and both leaves and tender stems are used, unless otherwise specified.
- * Non-reactive bowls are made from glass, ceramic or plastic. Use them in preference to metal bowls when marinating to prevent the acid in marinades reacting with metal and imparting a metallic taste.
- * Eggwash is lightly beaten egg unless otherwise specified, used for glazing or sealing.
- * Sugar syrup is made of equal parts caster sugar and water, unless otherwise specified. Bring the mixture to the boil to dissolve the sugar, remove it from the heat and cool it before use.
- * Acidulated water is a mixture of water and lemon juice; it prevents discolouration.
- * To sterilise jars and lids, run them through the hot rinse cycle in a dishwasher, or wash them in hot soapy water, rinse well, place on a tray in a cold oven and heat at 120C for 30 minutes.
- * To blind bake, line a pastry-lined tart tin with baking paper, then fill it with weights (ceramic weights, rice and dried beans work best).
- * To test whether marmalade, jam or jelly is at setting point, you'll need a chilled saucer (place a couple in the freezer before you start cooking). Remove the pan from the heat, spoon a little mixture onto the saucer and return it to the freezer for 30 seconds, then draw your finger through the mixture – it should leave a trail, indicating that the mixture has reached setting point. If not, cook for another few minutes before testing again. If you prefer, use a sugar thermometer to measure when the mixture reaches 105C; once it does, you can begin testing for setting point.
- * To clarify butter, cook it over low heat until the fat and the milk solids separate. Strain off the clear butter and discard the milk solids. You will lose about 20 per cent of the volume in milk solids.



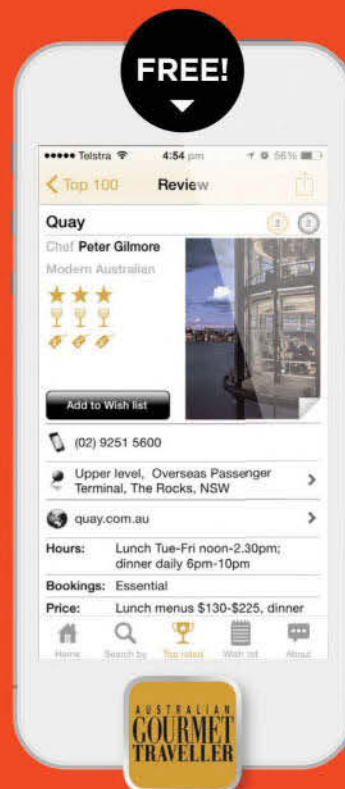
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Life of pie

*Fruit compote in a sugar-flecked sweet crust? It's a hard act to beat.
When it comes to dessert, everyone will want a piece of the pie.*

Rhubarb and strawberry lattice pie

Prep time 15 mins, cook 2 hrs

Serves 6-8

- 435 gm sheet vanilla bean shortcrust pastry (see note)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten with 1 tbsp milk
- 2 tbsp demerara sugar
- Pure icing sugar, for dusting
- Vanilla ice-cream, to serve
- Rhubarb and strawberry compote**
- 1 kg rhubarb (about 2 bunches), washed and cut into 3cm pieces
- 500 gm strawberries (2 punnets), hulled and some halved, some left whole
- 440 gm (2 cups) caster sugar
- Juice and finely grated rind of 1 orange
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 cinnamon quills
- 150 gm almond meal

- 1** For rhubarb and strawberry compote, toss rhubarb and strawberries with sugar in a bowl and stand to soften and release their juices (20-25 minutes). Place in a saucepan, add juices, rind and cinnamon, and simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until almost tender (6-8 minutes). Set aside to soften (5 minutes). Strain liquid into a clean saucepan and return cinnamon quills. Transfer fruit to a large bowl, then gently stir in almond meal and set aside.
- 2** Bring fruit cooking liquid to the boil and cook until reduced to a thick syrup (20-25 minutes).
- 3** Meanwhile, preheat oven to 180C. Place pastry on a sheet of baking paper and trim edges to fit a 25cm (4-cup) pie tin with edges overhanging,

and line the tin. Cut remaining pastry into 1.5cm-wide strips (use a crinkle cutter for fancy edges) and refrigerate to firm slightly. Pour fruit into pastry case, brush edges with eggwash and arrange pastry strips on top in a lattice pattern. Trim edge, brush top with eggwash, scatter with demerara sugar and bake until golden (50 minutes to 1 hour; cover edges with foil if pastry browns too quickly).

4 Dust pie with icing sugar and serve with vanilla ice-cream drizzled with warm rhubarb-cinnamon syrup.

Note We use Carême Vanilla Bean Sweet Pastry, which comes in 435gm sheets, but substitute any quality shortcrust pastry if it's unavailable. ●



WATCH & MAKE

Watch Emma Knowles make our cover recipe with the free **viewa** app, on iPad (pick up our digital edition via the Apple App Store) or online: gourmettraveller.com.au

LATTICE PIE

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